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UNITED STATES
MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM

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1972 - 1973
COMMAND HISTORY
VOLUME I

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PREFACE

↓
This 1972-1973 historical narrative marks the final volume in the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam Command History series begun in 1964. Our objective was to provide a complete, concise reference document covering the final 15 months of the command's activities and programs—through its disestablishment on 29 March 1973. The inclusive period varies slightly with the earlier histories which are limited to a calendar year. However, since the cease-fire preparation began in late October, and was virtually continuous thereafter, the final 15 months is treated as an entity. (Consists of volume 1972-73)

A word on the organization of and sources for the history may be of assistance to historians. The initial portion - OVERVIEW - attempts to place the MACV activities in perspective with the developing political and military situations throughout 1972-1973. Each OVERVIEW chapter includes an air and ground war narrative for South Vietnam. A series of annexes follows the OVERVIEW, narrating the MACV functions and the three major battles during the 1972 enemy offensive. With the personnel drawdowns affecting the Military History Branch throughout 1972, it was necessary to place considerable reliance on historical summaries written within the MACV agencies as source documents for the history. Recognizing that many historians may seek more in-depth coverage than this volume provides, included in addition to footnotes with each annex is a brief bibliographic note explaining the content and disposition of the MACV historical library.

Throughout the final months of MACV's existence many contributed to the preparation of this history. We especially recognize the debt owed to those MACV staff and advisory personnel and the Project CHICO personnel, who assisted us with their time and expertise. Particular credit goes to those Military History Branch members who moved to Hawaii to complete the work: LTC Wm. B. Seely, USA, MAJ Wm. J. Prout, USAF, MAJ James L. Tedrick, USA, and CPT Samuel H. Bailey III, USA, who completed the writing, editing, and preparation for printing; SP5 Dennis W. Garrett, USA, and SP4 M. Clifford Balch Jr., USA, who prepared the copy and provided administrative support; and SGT Jose N. M. Hernandez, USAF, illustrator. Credit also goes to those who prepared portions of the history but departed: LTC Wm. L. Allen, USA, the Command Historian until October; MAJ W. Scott Dillard, who became the US Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Commission historian in early February; MAJ Frederick W. Scammon III, USA, reassigned to Korea in March; MAJ Bertrand F. Ruggles, USAF, who assisted during the hectic days from November to January; MAJ Pat M. Stevens IV, USA, for his writing and editing from mid-February to early April; SFC Gerald R. Snyder, USA, the classified material custodian, for his yeoman service as the only enlisted member of the branch for many months; and Mrs. Margaret B. Silvetz, clerk-typist during February and March. During our Hawaii sojourn we are deeply indebted to the CINCPAC Historical Branch: COL Charles A. Gatzka for coordinating our move to Camp Smith and providing magnificent support during our stay; to Mr. Carl Clever and Mrs. Polly Tallman for their continuous patience and assistance with our many problems. Similarly, the cooperative spirit of numerous people on the CINCPAC, USARPAC, PACAF and PACFLT staffs eased our task and is appreciated. And finally, to the Navy Publications and Printing Service, Pacific Division, we extend our thanks for their invaluable advice and assistance.

WM K SCHRAGE
LTC, USA
Command Historian
Camp Smith, Hawaii
July 1973

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Chapter V - The Last 61 days 28Jan-29Mar73, Air & Ground Opns. - (Page 137-150).

Following Chapter V are Annexes A thru D:

Annex A - The Enemy, (Pages A-1 - A-72),

Annex B - Air and Naval Operations, (Pages B-1 - B-74),

Annex C - Military Assistance to the RVNAF, (Pages C-1 - C-94),

Annex D - Republic of Vietnam Development, Economic Affairs, (Pages D-1 - D-46).

Following each Chapter and Annex are numbered footnotes to the information contained indicating the sources for that information.

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18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES This is the First Volume of the Jan 72 - Mar 73, USMACV Annual Command History, ninth and last in a series of Histories covering the years 1964 thru March 1973, prepared in accordance with CINCPAC Instructions for Unified Commands.			
19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) Pre-Offensive, NVN Offensive and Stabilization Apr-Jun72, SVN Counteroffensive, Jul-Oct72, Preparation for the Truce, Nov72-Jan73, The Last Sixty-one Days, 28Jan-29Mar73, Operations, Goals & Strategy, Air, Naval Operations, Military Assistance to RVNAF, Republic of Vietnam Development, Economic Affairs, Stand Down			
20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number) This Volume I, Command History, Jan 72 - Mar 73, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam contains Letter of Promulgation, Preface, Title Page, Table of Contents, List of Figures, consisting of 24 Index Pages. Following are: Chapter I - Pre-Offensive Jan-Mar72 Air & Ground Operations (Pages 1-32), Chapter II - North Vietnamese Offensive & Stabilization (Pages 33-66), Chapter III - SVN Counteroffensive Jul-Oct72 Air & Ground Opns (Pages 67-102), Chapter IV - Preparation for the Truce, Nov72-Jan73; (Pages 103-136),			

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UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM

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15 July 1973

SUBJECT: Promulgation of the USMACV 1972-1973 Command History
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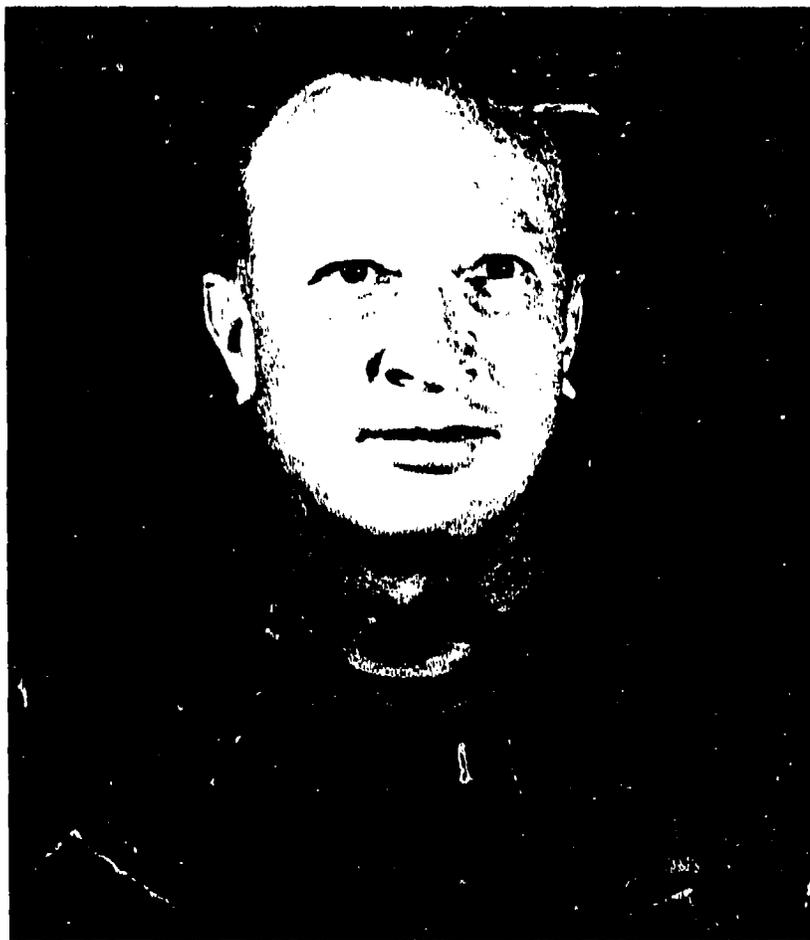
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GENERAL CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
COMUSMACV 3 July 1968—12 October 1972

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GENERAL FRED C. WEYAND
COMUSMACV 12 October 1972—29 March 1973

NOTE: General ABRAMS departed Vietnam on 29 June 1972 to become Chief of Staff, US Army. General Weyand was acting COMUSMACV from 29 June to 12 October 1972.

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Saigon, Vietnam

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... With the end of our direct military involvement in South Vietnam, I am tremendously proud of the overall performance of the several million American military and civilian persons who have had a part to play here. I am equally proud of the results that have flowed from the sacrifices of the millions of South Vietnamese, military and civilian alike, who have fought to secure their right of self-determination in the face of massive intimidation by force.

... In the period immediately ahead, the priority of our effort should go to lines of action that will help to insure that all parties recognize the cease-fire agreement for what it is, i. e., the only viable alternative that will lead to the lasting peace that the people of Southeast Asia need and want so desperately.

GENERAL FRED C. WEYAND
Saigon
7 March 1973

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OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

(U) By the end of March 1973 the Republic of Vietnam had entered a new phase in the struggle for survival. With the redeployment of the FVMAF and US forces, the young government was required for the first time to rely completely on its citizens and soldiers to pacify and defend the country. The concept of Vietnamization which successfully met the enemy's test during their NGUYEN HUE Offensive has been completed with the RVNAF superbly equipped at a strength of 1.1 million. The enemy's goal during the long years of war remained the same in 1972: control of South Vietnam. The US goal also remained the same: thwart North Vietnam's ambitions and help the South Vietnamese become self-sufficient. The failure of the North to subdue the South despite committing its entire ground combat force stands as testimony to the effectiveness of Allied efforts to make South Vietnam self-reliant militarily and politically. Social and economic progress was dependent upon effective security; the progress in these areas was real, but less dramatic.

(U) The North Vietnamese goal of gaining control of the South did not change during the last 15 months of MACV's tenure. The enemy has developed a sophisticated supply system running from the homeland through Laos and the Khmer Republic into South Vietnam. This system is augmented within South Vietnam by the "shadow supply system" which furnishes food, medicine, and money. To the strategies of negotiations at Paris and guerrilla activity in the countryside in early 1972 was added a conventional invasion using infantry, tanks, and artillery which met with little success. Faced with failure militarily, the enemy returned to the bargaining table and agreed to a cease-fire which he used as a cover to continue guerrilla activity and buildup for a future military operation, should the cease-fire conditions not gain him political control.

(U) The basic Allied goals were to build South Vietnam's self-sufficiency in political, economic, socio-psychological, and military aspects of nationhood compatible with the Nixon Doctrine, to raise

--All times in the Overview are Saigon local times. MACV reorganized from a J-staff to a director staff in May. All staff designations used in the Overview are director staff designations.

The Overview is based on material contained in the annexes (except for the ground operations subchapters), and, therefore, is not footnoted. Footnote references are found in the various annexes. Sources for the ground operations subchapters are the Operations Directorate (MACDO) monthly summaries and the Measurement of Progress (MOP) Reports for the specific months mentioned in the text.

the price of aggression for the enemy to a degree that would cause him to abandon his goal of dominance over South Vietnam, and to prepare the Republic for the assumption of a leading role in improved regional cooperation and development. To attain these goals, the Allies carried out an intensive land, sea, and air interdiction campaign against the enemy throughout much of Southeast Asia. Further, Vietnamization—the improvement and modernization of the RVNAF, pacification, and combat operations—was designed to allow the Vietnamese to assume increasing amounts of the total military effort necessary to insure their country's survival and prosperity. This strategy successfully met the test in that the enemy's offensive was halted and driven back while the government continued to function and respond to the challenge of continuing toward social, political, and economic goals during and after the offensive.

(U) The interrelated civil and military system of South Vietnam combined military authority with civil functions at each level of government down to district level in order to assure that political, economic, social, and military goals were achieved with a unified effort. While there was much success by the government in achieving their goals, the major problems of pervasive corruption, inexperienced leadership in the RVNAF, lack of middle management expertise, weak national identification by the people, a fragmented body politic, and an over-reliance on the military to govern were problems that had yet to be successfully addressed.

(U) Vietnamization had met its first test. The RVNAF had successfully stopped and driven back the enemy with little assistance from Allied ground forces. During the offensive shattered units were quickly reformed, retrained, and re-equipped. Major changes in organization and equipment were successfully implemented. Pacification received severe setbacks in the areas of heavy combat, but elsewhere was only slowed. After it was clear that the enemy was not going to succeed, pacification programs resumed in most areas. Exile governments were reformed in refugee camps, Territorial Forces went back to eliminating local forces, and development programs regained momentum.

(U) It is significant that the Republic withstood an unprecedented offensive even though the enemy had not abandoned his strategic objectives for Southeast Asia and continued his efforts to counter the gains made in South Vietnam. North Vietnam's overall goal—complete domination of the Republic

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of Vietnam and establishment of a sphere of influence throughout Indochina—remained. The cease-fire merely afforded North Vietnam a political as well as a military avenue in the pursuit of its aims. Hanoi's desire to conquer South Vietnam was dictated both by the desire to expand its area of political control and by the need to secure the rich agricultural areas of the South. The enemy's activities in Laos and the Khmer Republic were also derived from political power-seeking and the necessity to control vital base areas and lines of communication.

(U) The enemy effort in South Vietnam required a massive input of men and materiel from North Vietnam through an extensive supply and infiltration system. Nearly all replacement manpower came from North Vietnam, as VC recruitment within South Vietnam had become increasingly difficult. The vast bulk of arms and ammunition was also infiltrated. The principal corridor for this infiltration was the complex road, trail, and water network known as the Ho Chi Minh trail through the Laotian panhandle and its extension down the Mekong River corridor in the Khmer Republic.

(U) Because of the pressure from cross-border operations in past years, the enemy had expanded his supply operations to the west and reinforced his tactical units in southern Laos. To protect his lines of communication he stationed major combat elements in the east-central portion of the Khmer Republic. Although Allied air interdiction caused heavy losses to enemy materiel in Laos and the Khmer Republic, the strength of his 1972 offensive was testimony to the effectiveness of the Ho Chi Minh trail network, supplemented by the "shadow supply system" through which enemy units in South Vietnam were supported with funds and locally acquired supplies, especially food, medical supplies, and clothing. Despite the constant harassment, the enemy continued to infiltrate men and materiel until the cease-fire, when the lack of opposition from the air in Laos, North Vietnam, and South Vietnam allowed him to resupply openly, at a more rapid rate.

(U) By early 1972 it was believed that the enemy had developed a master plan designating 1972 as the "year of decision." It required North Vietnamese and Viet Cong main force units to strike hard in Laos, the Khmer, and South Vietnam to spread the Allied Forces and emphasize the US and South Vietnamese vulnerabilities. The Republic of Vietnam would be the key theater of war and actions there would decide the fate of all of Indochina. The change in strategy was reflected in a COSVN unnumbered resolution in December 1971, which called for a shift in the balance of power through the use of main force warfare and political ini-

tiatives. It also called for the defeat of the Vietnamization and pacification programs, expansion of Viet Cong control of land areas, and protection of base areas and lines of communication in Laos, the Khmer, and South Vietnam. Additional enemy objectives were revealed in numerous documents and agent reports which subsequently were summarized in COSVN Directive 43, dated March 1972. This directive reiterated and expanded the goals outlined in the unnumbered resolution and revealed other aims which included disrupting the South Vietnamese economy, improving the morale of the Viet Cong infrastructure, influencing the US and world opinion, and discrediting and removing the Thieu government. The strategy appeared to be that the enemy would demand a cease-fire in place after seizing major land areas with a major offensive, and thus force a negotiated settlement of the war on terms favorable to himself.

(U) RVNAF and Allied organizations conducted a variety of operations and programs in a coordinated attack on the total enemy system. Such operations were derived from a combined campaign plan, written primarily by the RVNAF Joint General Staff and signed by the Chief of the JGS and commanders of each of the Free World Military Assistance Forces.

(U) The coordinated Allied effort was a triple-edged attack, including an extensive combined interdiction campaign to prevent enemy infiltration and resupply efforts through Laos; coordinated ground operations to seek out and destroy the enemy main and local force units; and complementary programs to neutralize the Viet Cong infrastructure.

(U) The combined interdiction campaign integrated Allied air, land, and sea assets in an effort to sever the enemy's vital logistics lifeline. The keystone of the interdiction effort was an intensive, sustained air interdiction program. As US redeployments continued, air power remained our most important means for denying the enemy the capability to build, maintain, and use his logistics system. Air interdiction operations were targeted primarily against the enemy's major means of resupply, the trucks moving down the Laotian logistics corridor, as well as the road and trail network over which they moved, and the associated defenses. This network provided prime targets for air interdiction operations and were hit with B-52, TACAIR, and gunship sorties.

(U) The second portion of the integrated interdiction campaign was the land interdiction effort. Virtually all ground operations in South Vietnam contributed to the land interdiction program; however, those operations which were most directly involved were the cross-border operations into the

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Khmer Republic. Before the cease-fire, RVNAF conducted ground operations in that part of the Khmer Republic adjacent to South Vietnam's Military Region 4 with the objective of destroying the enemy's stockpiles and disrupting his lines of communication.

(U) The ocean surveillance operation, MARKET TIME, sought to interdict enemy resupply attempts along Vietnam's long coastline. As the year began, the USN provided an air patrol outer barrier, but when the USN discontinued the effort, the Vietnamese were forced to rely entirely on their inner surface barrier patrol craft and outer surface barrier cutters, complemented by a radar network which could search the entire coastline of the Republic. During the cease-fire successful blocking of enemy coastal infiltration was heavily dependent on preventing the enemy's capture of a South Vietnamese port.

(U) The enemy offensive in the spring of 1972 caused extensive modification of this plan as land and air assets had to be diverted against enemy combat units. As of 28 January 1973 the total interdiction effort was limited, by the Paris accords and the Laotian cease-fire, to the Khmer Republic and the Republic of Vietnam and its territorial waters. Even within South Vietnam, offensive operations into enemy-held areas were forbidden. In clear violation of the Paris agreement the NVA used the period to move supplies from North Vietnam into Laos and South Vietnam.

(U) The second element in the total effort against the enemy system was the conduct of ground and air operations with the goal of destroying enemy main and local force units and providing security to the population. The operations conducted in Military Regions 1 and 2 were similar. Regular RVNAF units conducted combat operations to locate and destroy enemy main force units and base areas in the foothills and mountainous areas to the west. Regional and Popular Forces operated in the populous coastal areas and out into the foothills, providing military support to community defense and local development. Because of the major enemy threat to northern Military Region 1, considerable effort was devoted to denying the enemy the ability to infiltrate his main force units across or around the demilitarized zone into the area. Air power was used extensively to interdict enemy movement and to disrupt efforts to reinforce and destroy supply areas. The enemy offensive had been considerably blunted by this tactic, as spoiling operations were conducted prior to the offensive which kept the enemy off balance. One year after the beginning of the enemy offensive, the RVNAF was defensively deployed to counter the continuing enemy threat, conducting limited offensive opera-

tions, reacting to enemy pressures, and protecting lines of communication.

(U) The most active combat during 1972 was performed by the air resources of the US. TACAIR and R-52s attacked the enemy in his homeland, interdicted his supply routes, and furnished close air support on the battlefield. Particularly dramatic was the rapid buildup of US air assets from other overseas commands in response to the enemy offensive. US Army air, in addition to reconnaissance and gunship support, deployed from Europe two airborne antitank missile systems which proved highly effective against enemy armor.

(U) The last American ground combat troops were withdrawn in the summer of 1972 after completing their missions of securing friendly installations. With the exception of the Korean forces, FWMAF concentrated on advisory and civic action programs until their withdrawal. Korean forces continued to secure portions of Military Region 2 and conducted limited offensive operations until their redeployment.

(U) The final element in attacking the enemy was a series of programs designed to neutralize the Viet Cong infrastructure (VCI). Success would greatly inhibit North Vietnam's freedom in South Vietnam, for the NVA was dependent on the VCI for guides, intelligence, com-mo-liaison, insuring a friendly or neutral host population, and logistical support of food, medicine, and money. Until the offensive struck, Territorial Forces had conducted operations in known enemy base areas, conducted patrols, and set night ambushes. They were complemented in this effort by the National Police and People's Self-Defense Force which provided security within the villages and hamlets. The Phung Hoang and Chieu Hoi Programs were also aimed at the VCI. The Phung Hoang Program provided for intelligence gathering and dossier preparation on suspected VCI with operations targeted against individuals, who when captured were tried and sent to prison if adjudged to be VCI. The Chieu Hoi program offered the enemy—NVA and VC alike—the chance to voluntarily surrender to the Vietnamese Government in exchange for full amnesty. Finally, the National Police operated a series of checkpoints aimed at preventing enemy infiltration of supplies and a disruption of the "shadow supply system."

(U) The focus of the US logistics effort during the final fifteen months was support of the RVNAF and the achievement of a self-sufficient RVNAF logistics system. Even before the bulk of US ground combat forces withdrawal was completed, the logistics emphasis had shifted to intense efforts to guide, assist, and support the RVNAF effort. At the beginning of the year two projects were

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continuing to furnish the equipment necessary to strengthen the RVNAF. Projects 981 and 982 had been initiated in 1971, designed to deliver expeditiously the major item TOE/TA shortages, as well as secondary items and repair parts. As the US units withdrawal continued, KEYSTONE transfers from USARV units became a prime element of this program early in the year. The NGUYEN HUE Offensive resulted in a massive resupply operation to provide immediate replacement for materiel lost in combat. In May a decision to increase the RVNAF combat capability required the creation of seven new tank, air defense artillery, and artillery battalions. Project ENHANCE, as it was called, had the objective of supplying the major end items required to complete equipping the new RVNAF units. Simultaneously, Project VER was initiated to accelerate the delivery of spare parts, thus alleviating a critical zero balance situation in the RVNAF direct and general support units, as well as to determine the reasons for the zero balances and the methods to solve this problem. In late October the impending cease-fire resulted in Project ENHANCE PLUS—the expedited delivery of all undelivered balances remaining in the aforementioned programs, plus additional add-on materiel directed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. When the final shipload of ENHANCE PLUS materiel reached Newport on 12 December, the RVNAF equipment posture was better than it had been prior to the NGUYEN HUE Offensive, and under the terms of the cease-fire agreement future equipment losses could be replaced on a one-for-one basis.

(U) Many programs contributed toward the modernization and functionalization of the RVNAF logistics system in 1972. During the enemy offensive a critical decision was made to activate the RVNAF Automated Materiel Management System (RAMMS), a computer system requiring considerable preparation and training time, designed to improve the RVNAF logistics management. The RAMMS supported a new centralized commodity management organization, the National Materiel Management Agency (NMMA). When the cease-fire came, the RVNAF was operating its own modern computerized logistical system with residual US contractor support. Contractor and civil service technical assistance was being continued to cover gaps, mainly in the management and maintenance areas. The RVNAF logistics capability was considered adequate, provided the necessary priority and command emphasis was applied to make the system work.

(U) The Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) were woven into the political/military structure at each echelon. In the eight years which have passed since the first American combat troops

landed, the RVNAF has organized, trained, and deployed a ground force of 13 ground divisions, an air force of more than 2,000 aircraft, a navy of more than 1,000 craft, and several independent infantry and armor units. By March 1973 the RVNAF was just slightly under 1.1 million, consisting of 12 Army (ARVN) divisions. With the Marine Division, which the Joint General Staff used as a strategic reserve force, the RVNAF had the equivalent of 13 divisions.

(U) The VNAF vastly increased its capabilities through 1972 and early 1973. It proved itself equal to the task of doing its part to stem the Communist offensive and to participate in sustained operations without the direct assistance of US military personnel, while at the same time expanding in size and acquiring new aircraft to become a more sophisticated fighting force.

(U) The VNN assumed full responsibility for conducting riverine and coastal patrol operations formerly conducted by the US Navy. In addition, it acquired highly sophisticated military equipment, as a result of the US Navy redeployment, and organized a new logistics system to support the increased scope of its operations.

(U) Concurrent with the ARVN manpower buildup, and of special emphasis in 1972, was the re-equipping of the ARVN divisions with newer weapons and equipment to increase their firepower and overall combat capability. Emphasis on training increased proportionately to the buildup and included recruit training, officer and NCO leadership courses, and periodic refresher training for the maneuver battalions.

(U) Gradual improvement in the ARVN occurred partially as a result of the assumption of the entire ground combat responsibility as US forces redeployed. The experience gained in the planning and execution of complex, large-scale, cross-border operations, starting with LAM SON 719 early in 1971, was invaluable. Additional experience gained during the offensive showed that the ARVN command and control system was able to move brigades and divisions between the military regions without the loss of combat effectiveness.

(U) A part of the RVNAF and even larger than the regular forces, were the Territorial Forces, which included the Regional and Popular Forces. These elements were charged with the mission of assisting the regular forces in maintaining security within the Republic. Regional Force (RF) rifle companies operating separately or in company groups and battalions, had the general mission of conducting offensive operations against the enemy local forces within their respective province. Their mission was to attack the enemy outside the pro-

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vince's population centers and to act as reaction forces. Their success allowed the regular ARVN forces to concentrate their efforts against enemy main force units and base areas. Training for Regional Forces was restructured to meet the requirements of the expanded offensive operations entrusted to them. The Popular Force (PF) platoons provided security for hamlets or villages against small bands of VC guerrillas in the immediate vicinity. The Popular Force soldier was recruited locally and stationed in his home village where he participated in daylight patrols, perimeter defense, and night ambushes.

(U) Concurrent with conducting combat operations and assisting the RVNAF, MACV was involved with helping the Vietnamese achieve their economic, political, and social goals. As developed by the Government of Vietnam in its 1972-75 Community Defense and Local Development Plan, major em-

phasis was directed toward three objectives. The first, self-defense, sought to consolidate secure areas and extend security to additional areas. Next, self-government was designed to develop and strengthen the constitutional democratic structures, especially local government institutions and to improve local administration. Finally, local self-development aimed to insure prosperity to all by developing the local economy, reducing dependence on foreign aid, and advancing toward self-sufficiency.

(U) Self-defense at the local level was aimed at complementing RVNAF efforts against NVA and VC units by securing the local population. The Territorial Forces were supplemented by National Police and People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF) in the internal security of the village against enemy terrorism and sabotage. The National Police, 120,000 strong, were deployed to every secure



A Popular Force soldier from the 9th Infantry Division takes aim during a light contact with the enemy in the Delta.

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village in the country. In addition to the normal police functions of upholding the law, maintaining order, and insuring public safety, the National Police were charged with operating the Phung Hoang Program. The PSDF was composed of over four million unpaid civilians in the villages. Their mission was to provide security within the village and assist in the local self-development and self-defense programs. Progress in developing local self-governance continued through 1972 and into 1973. Inasmuch as nearly every village and hamlet already had elected governments, emphasis was placed on training these elected officials for their responsibilities, administrative reform, particularly in reorganizing village administrative councils and hamlet management boards to realistically meet differing needs in individual circumstances, and developing a sense of cooperation between elected bodies and administrators. The offensive disrupted many local governments and pre-empted training for officials. In addition the selection of hamlet chiefs and village officials was removed from local control and made a responsibility of the province chief. Although the village chief was still elected, his freedom of action was curtailed by this wartime expedient. Local elections were due in 1972 but were suspended until after the offensive. However, the local governments remained strong despite determined enemy opposition.

(U) Vietnam's second national election, held in October of 1971, saw President Thieu reelected without opposition. The stability of the national leadership as it governed during a second term was in marked contrast to the turbulent years between the fall of Diem and the first national elections in 1967. The accrued legitimacy of the national government could be sustained and increased if successful advancement of military, political, social, and economic programs continued.

(U) Economic self-development interlocked with political stability. Without the latter, little or no progress could be made in the economic area. In Vietnam, the farmer was basic to the economy. Recognizing this, the Government of Vietnam instituted a land reform program, known as land-to-the-tiller, which provided economic and social opportunity to over one million Vietnamese farm families. The goal to distribute titles to one million hectares of rice land by March 1973 was 80 percent accomplished as progress continued after being interrupted by the offensive. Since 1969 agricultural production has increased in almost all areas. In 1972, for the first time in 7 years, Vietnam was expected to achieve self-sufficiency in rice production; however, the NVA offensive and severe drought prevented reaching the goal. Realizing that the introduction of miracle rice to Asia would eventually

create a surplus market, the Government of Vietnam encouraged agricultural diversification by introducing livestock, as well as feed grain, oil and tree crops.

(U) An infusion of development capital into the rural areas was also necessary so that modern technology in the form of mechanization, irrigation, and fertilizers can be applied to the farm land. The Government of Vietnam Agricultural Development Bank had almost 22 billion piasters available to lend to farmers in 1972 at reasonable rates of interest. The Village Self-Development Program, in addition to teaching democratic processes, was a program designed to inject development capital into the rural villages. Each village received at least 300,000 piasters for its own self-development program projects. In some cases the Agricultural Development Bank lent funds to the village people, matching their own investment in village self-development. This loan program was a transitional step towards the eventual local financing of all small development projects.

(U) The war in the countryside caused an influx of people into the cities, and today over 40 percent of the population lives in urban areas. As a result of this tremendous growth, the urban governments were able to provide only minimal public services. Former development plans singled out the countryside, but the Government of Vietnam with MACV's advice and assistance paid special attention to improving urban living conditions.

(U) The Vietnamese economy opened strongly in 1972 with continued price stability, increased exports, and the dismantling of the soldiers' Mutual Aid and Savings Fund. Savings and tax collections were also up. The economy was not greatly affected in the short term by the enemy offensive, except for reduced interprovincial transportation, a decrease in logging and rubber tapping, and the economic burden associated with refugees. A mild recession had set in by summer due to sluggish demand for both locally produced and imported goods. By fall an upturn was discernible; however, the uneasiness during the months preceding the cease-fire led to stagnation as investors evidenced an unwillingness to take new risks. Unemployment remained high in the urban areas. The net effects of national tax and economic reforms were expected to assist in getting the economy moving. A clarified political situation was necessary for any real progress in any case.

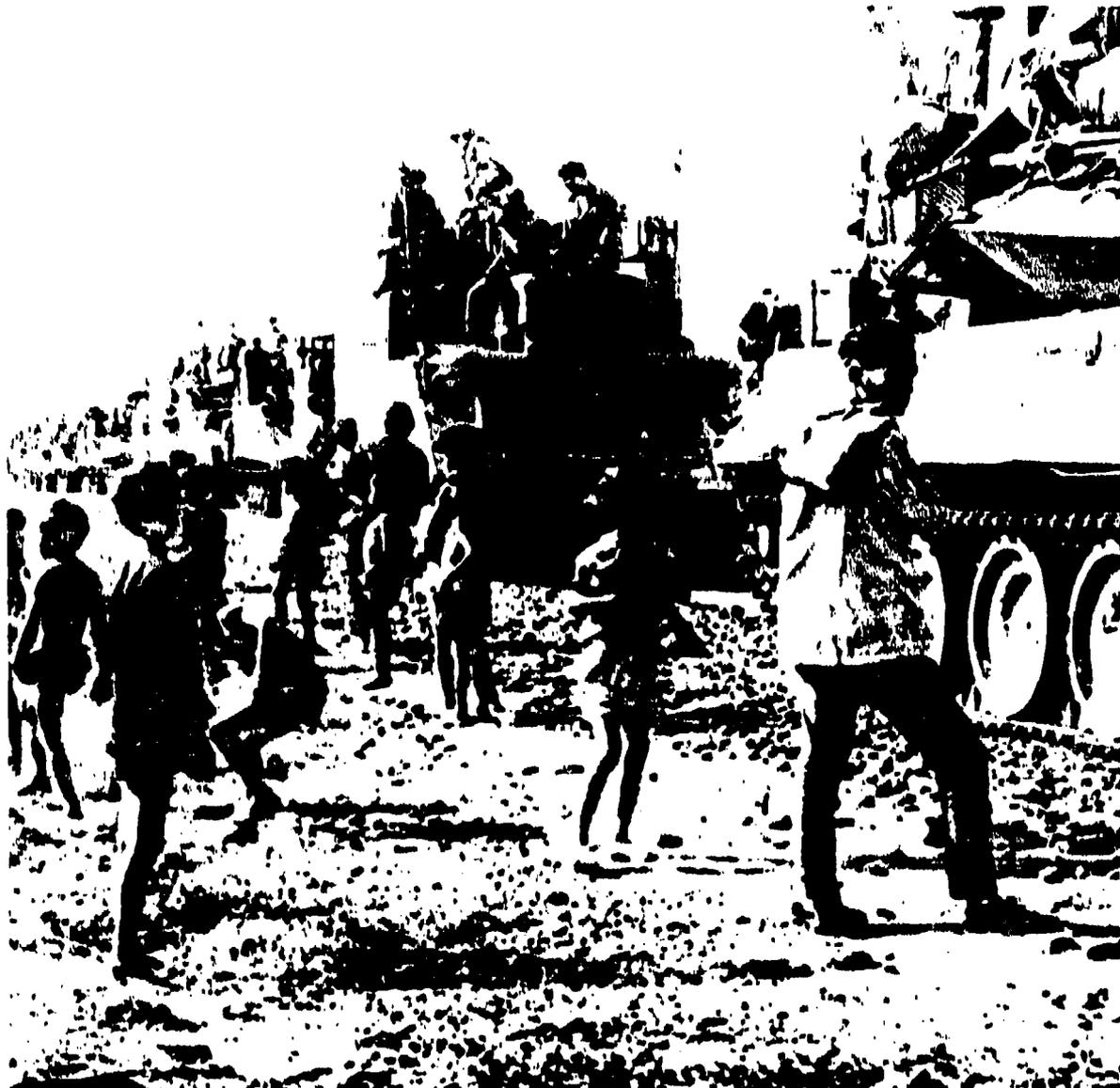
(U) The people of Vietnam have suffered greatly. Since the war's beginning a quarter of the Vietnamese people have been in refugee status. Disabled veterans, widows, and orphans number in the hundreds of thousands. The Government of

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Vietnam made a major effort to assist these millions of war victims with food, money, housing, and medical care. Although the refugees problem was far from being solved, it was a measure of success that over five million refugees were assisted by the Government of Vietnam since 1964, and that fewer than 700,000 remained to be helped.

(U) The progress made by the Government of Vietnam toward self-sufficiency and the reduction in enemy effectiveness described has taken place gradually and has been accompanied by a steady

reduction in US forces beginning in 1969. The dismantling and redeployment of the US force was a complex project. It was a dynamic situation requiring careful and very flexible planning to maintain a balanced force throughout each phase. Base and installation transfers and closures were accomplished in an orderly fashion. Combat support to RVNAF in 1972 consisted primarily of air support and naval gunfire. Logistical and advisory support also was reduced as the RVNAF became increasingly self-sufficient.



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Confident ARVN airborne troopers waiting to board their aircraft.

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CHAPTER 1

PRE-OFFENSIVE: JANUARY - MARCH 1972

(U) The year opened in South Vietnam with progress evident in most of the areas MACV influenced: A successful Presidential election had been held the previous October, abundant crops were forecast, enemy influence in the countryside was at an all time low, and ARVN troops were confidently conducting operations in the enemy's base areas. Yet any optimism was tempered with the knowledge that the enemy was continuing to build up his forces despite intensive air and naval interdiction operations. Enemy disruption had failed to materialize during the October elections, but the evident progress of South Vietnam's young political and military system, coupled with the declining strength of US ground combat troops, offered the North Vietnamese a chance to test Vietnamization before it was completed. The timing of the offensive was uncertain—estimates ranged from President Nixon's China trip, to Tet, to the US Presidential elections—however, that an attack from the NVA would be forthcoming was certain. The NVA would lead the attack, for the VC in the South had not recovered from their earlier debacle of Tet, 1968.

(U) President Thieu was busily readying his country, pledging to yield no territory to the Communists. He greeted President Nixon's 70,000 troop withdrawal announcement of 18 January as an endorsement of the success of the RVNAF's modernization and performance. Private opinion in the Republic was less sanguine. President Nixon's earlier linking of the US troop withdrawal to the prisoner of war release had led some South Vietnamese to feel that the US was abandoning them. The further troop cuts, President Nixon's offer of complete withdrawal within six months of the prisoner release, and Secretary Laird's statement that US troops would not be reintroduced into South Vietnam caused some misgivings among the populace. The peace initiative offered by the US and South Vietnam in late January was rejected by the Communists, who set forth a proposal of their own, after revealing that they had been having secret talks with the US Presidential advisor, Dr. Henry Kissinger. President Thieu was regarded by the Saigon press as having bowed somewhat to US pressure.

(U) However, Hanoi also had problems. To the standard negative rhetoric denouncing both Thieu and the US there were added words of caution to the People's Republic of China not to let President Nixon split the socialist unity during his visit. In-

creased vilification of the US President by the DRV clearly indicated Hanoi's worry that the Chinese might reduce their support to North Vietnam.

(U) Through February and March the Paris talks were an on and off proposition. On 23 March the US and South Vietnam suspended the Paris talks due to the Communist refusal to negotiate seriously. Meanwhile, President Thieu was busy visiting the military regions to insure that plans to thwart the enemy were complete.

(C) During the first quarter of 1972 MACV concentrated on assisting the training, modernization, and force structuring of the RVNAF while reorganizing in the face of continued decrease in strength. The US had not been active in offensive combat operations for some months. The 16 US maneuver battalions remaining in-country as 1972 opened performed "dynamic defense" security of logistics installations in Military Regions 1 and 3. The principal US combat effort was from TACAIR, US Army Aviation, and naval gunfire support of ARVN ground operations as well as the air interdiction in North Vietnam, Laos, and the Khmer Republic. Korean forces of 19 maneuver battalions were deployed along the central coast in Military Region 2, conducting light clearing operations. During the quarter one Korean and ten US maneuver battalions redeployed. On New Year's Day, US strength was just over 150,000; by the end of March it was 95,000; by 1 May it was to drop to 69,000. FWMAF were withdrawing too. The Royal Thai Division Headquarters and its 2d Brigade completed redeployment on 4 February, the Royal Australian Task Force withdrew on 7 March, and the Korean forces continued withdrawing the 100th Logistics Command and the 2d Marine Brigade. President Nixon's announcement in January of a 70,000 man reduction of US forces by 1 May meant that Vietnamization was to be continued as planned. However, contingency plans for the expansion of US air assets were readied and implementation began as evidence clearly indicated an impending NVA offensive.

(C) Reorganization of MACV was a continuing function. To meet lowered strength ceilings MACV continuously reassessed its efforts, seeking to eliminate or combine positions as functions terminated and to restructure where necessary. The major organizational change was the projected combining of the MACV and 7th AF Headquarters in the late spring. Primary US concerns were security for the remaining US forces and installations, evaluation of the US forces structure, and retrograde of US equip-

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ment. The major task of MACV, of course, continued to be assistance to the Republic in accomplishing its military, social, political, and economic goals.

(U) In the first quarter the dominant effort throughout South Vietnam was preparation for the impending enemy offensive, expected to begin in early February, coincident with Tet. Fortunately, the offensive did not materialize until the end of March, giving US and Vietnamese officials time to build up defenses and close out annual pacification and development programs at the end of February. Territorial Forces expanded their operations throughout the quarter as enemy terrorism increased in each of the first three months of 1972. However, village elections continued to be carried out; Tet was celebrated, albeit with apprehension; and economic and agricultural development were proceeding nicely.

(U) The increase in enemy terrorism followed a pattern consistent with previous years of increasing terrorism prior to Tet. Significant was the increase in abductions in Military Regions 1 and 2 as the enemy tried to gain control over the population. In Military Region 3, the weak local VC used economy of force measures in attacks on isolated Territorial Force outposts, US bases, and government offices. In the Delta, enemy emphasis was on overrunning the operating bases of the Territorial Forces. The Territorial Forces continued to counter enemy threats through the use of mechanical ambushes and night operations. Refresher training and deployment of territorial artillery were concluded as the Regional Forces conducted operations outside their own provinces. The People's Self-Defense Force assumed armed security missions to free Territorial Forces for mobile operations.

(U) During the quarter most village and hamlet elections were held on schedule, with more candidates running than in previous years. One notable exception was in Binh Dinh Province, where 30 percent of the March hamlet elections were postponed for lack of candidates.

(U) Development proceeded well throughout the quarter, with over 90 percent of the Village Self-Development (VSD) projects completed. An even better record was attained in public works projects—those dealing with irrigation, roads, canals, and public utilities. Agricultural crops in Military Regions 3 and 4 were unusually large, but the land reform program was behind schedule. Agricultural experiments with various crops such as sorghum, peanuts, corn, and fruit trees were being encouraged in an effort to diversify crops and lessen the dependence on rice. However, even as Ministry of Social Welfare officials prepared to return 50,000 refugees to their villages in Military Region 2 and 1,400 refugees from Military Region 1 were being

resettled in Military Region 3, supplies were being stockpiled for relief of refugees expected in the wake of the impending offensive. Such preparations were not in vain, for the pacification effort was about to receive a severe test.

(C) Substantial economic progress was made during the first quarter of the year. Prices remained stable, exports were up, an economic development fund had been set up, and the government had dismantled the Soldiers' Mutual Aid and Savings Fund which had threatened to inhibit private sector investments. In addition, savings and tax collections were up. On the negative side, substantial economic legislation was stalled in the legislature and the budget deficit was rising. On balance, the economic progress was encouraging.

(C) At the beginning of 1972 continued emphasis was maintained on RVNAF progress in achieving logistics self-sufficiency. The services assumed increased responsibility for depot supply and maintenance, to include POL, ammunition, general supplies and equipment, port facility operations, and an in-country distribution system. Major projects underway included a depot upgrade program directed toward modernizing the engineer, signal, and ordnance depots—with emphasis on the ARVN ammunition depots. Turnover of POL distribution facilities was underway, with the complete turnover of all facilities tied to the declining US support requirements. Responsibility for the in-country movement of supplies was rapidly being assumed by the RVNAF. The development of a responsive logistics system capable of supporting the RVNAF was moving ahead more rapidly than expected. Expeditions equipping of the RVNAF, with the US furnishing the materiel necessary to strengthen the forces, continued under Projects 981 and 982, augmented by KEYSTONE transfers from USARV as US units continued to draw down. The progressive turnover of US communications-electronics facilities began early in the year, coupled with an accelerated training program as the RVNAF began to assume an increasing role in the operation and maintenance of the Single Integrated Telecommunications System. In January, 59 communications facilities were approved for transfer to the RVNAF. In February the US decided to continue operating multiplex equipment at SIMS sites, which resulted in the SIMS retaining the flexibility to support the RVNAF combat operations.

(S) The FY 73 RVNAF Force Structure Review, approved by COMUSMACV and forwarded for CINCPAC and JCS approval in January 1972, provided the RVNAF with a significant interdiction capability and upgraded the Territorial Forces. Because of the 1.1 million manpower ceiling imposed

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by the Consolidated RVNAF Improvement and Modernization Program (CRIMP), compensatory trade-offs were required within the RVNAF to allow for the changes; these required changes were being studied by both MACV and JGS.

(C) Within the ARVN, the newly activated 3d Infantry Division was being deployed in Military Region 1 and was receiving further on-the-ground training. Several of the major elements of the 3d Division was still waiting to be activated or deployed with the Division. Two armor units, the 20th Tank Regiment and one squadron of the 19th Cavalry Regiment, completed their activation, training, and deployment during this period. The deployment of 41 Territorial artillery platoons completed the program to activate and deploy 178 units. In March MACV approved a JGS request to reorganize ARVN area signal battalions to support the Single Integrated Telecommunications System and approved the reorganization of the ARVN signal support battalions and signal support groups to support the Army Callibration System.

(C) The VNAF increased in size during this period to 44 flying squadrons with the activation of one UH-1 squadron and one C-7 squadron. The C-7 squadron was activated on 1 March and by the end of the month was rated operationally ready. The total

number of assigned VNAF aircraft increased from 1,222 to 1,392.

(C) VNN effectiveness in coastal surveillance operations improved with the addition of eight radar stations, bringing the number of operational stations to 16 by the end of this period. The VN Marine Corps experienced no changes in force structure.

(S) During this period the major influences on advisor assignment plans were the improvement in RVNAF capabilities and force level reductions. In the ground units advisors were assigned down to the regimental level except for the airborne and marine divisions, which had battalion advisors; due to the improvements of the ARVN divisions and US force level reductions, several regimental advisory teams were withdrawn. AFGP advisors were allocated into teams stationed at VNAF bases to assist in the development of VNAF combat capability; as the VNAF attained self-sufficiency in a particular area or at a particular base, the team was reduced and a new one built to advise and assist in some other functional area or at some other base. Assignment of naval advisors included all functional areas of sea operations command, riverine command headquarters, and other commands; advisor support also extended down to individual units including ship's riders on blue water ships.

AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(S) During the first quarter of 1972 the air war over South Vietnam was influenced by a number of factors. In keeping with US national policy the numbers of both US Army and US Air Force aircraft located in-country were reduced. Some units were returned to CONUS but others, especially USAF units, moved to bases in Thailand. For example, from 1 January to 31 March US Army aircraft (fixed and rotary wing) declined from 2,098 to 1,015. During the same period the USAF reflected a net drop of 71 aircraft; however, the Thai bases showed a net gain of 2 aircraft and there was an increase in the number of F-4s (the primary tactical strike aircraft) from 201 to 221. This reflected the return to CONUS of some older aircraft, such as the B-57, and their replacement by more modern aircraft. It also included C-7 and C-123 aircraft which were given to VNAF. Thus, while the enemy could observe a net drop in the number of US aircraft and US airmen in South Vietnam, the tactical force remained strong and in fact had been augmented by some tactical aircraft on a temporary basis. This signaled a recognition on the part of the responsible commanders that the intelligence indicators pointed toward an enemy offensive which, it was believed, would occur either during the Tet holiday or perhaps would be timed to strike during

the visit of the American President to the People's Republic of China. Both analysis of sensor field readouts and visual reconnaissance apparently confirmed these suspicions in addition to information gained from prisoner interrogation and an obvious increase in enemy-initiated incidents. Enemy logistical activity normally increased during the "dry season"; however, the increase in activity in early 1972 seemed higher even than the usual seasonal surge. COMMANDO HUNT VII, the air interdiction campaign directed at the enemy logistics network, especially the Ho Chi Minh Trail, was in progress. Information on what was happening in North Vietnam itself was difficult to obtain due to severe restrictions imposed by the Rules of Engagement on overflights of North Vietnam. Nevertheless, the enemy was becoming increasingly bold in the use of North Vietnam-based MIGs against the COMMANDO HUNT aircraft and the introduction of SA-2 missile batteries into hitherto lightly defended areas of Laos, the southern part of North Vietnam, and even the Demilitarized Zone itself. Construction work on the airfields in North Vietnam to make them MIG capable also was observed, along with a marked increase in conventional AAA forces by the enemy. To a certain extent this required an adjustment of sortie allocation since more

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resources had to be committed to protect strike aircraft.

(S) During the first quarter of 1972 the US flew, on an average, just slightly over forty percent of the total sorties in Southeast Asia. Thus, well over half of the total effort were sorties flown by the VNAF and the Royal Laotian Air Force. For the most part the indigenous air forces were used primarily in close air support of troops while the US flew the majority of the interdiction strikes. For example, during the first quarter in South Vietnam the USAF flew an average of 27 percent of its sorties in close air support, whereas the VNAF for the same period flew an average of 87 percent

of its effort in close air support (Fig. 1-1). This was partly due to a greater ability to communicate with the ground forces (i.e., no language barrier) but was also influenced by the fact that the more sophisticated aircraft were better able to strike heavily defended targets and to operate during the night and periods of reduced visibility, using tactics beyond the technical capability of the VNAF aircraft. Most of the USAF close air support strikes were flown by the A-37 aircraft, whereas the interdiction mission was performed mostly by the F-4s.

(S) Total USAF tactical air sorties in South Vietnam declined in each of the first three months;

ATTACK SORTIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

		1972											1973	
		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
FIXED WING ATTACK SORTIES	USAF	188	885	271	5439	8007	8897	8048	4765	2513	2426	3922	1643	1120
	USN	8	690	128	4883	3237	2032	2044	1907	1680	2026	2644	2273	3665
	USMC	0	0	0	681	1361	1877	1940	1743	1196	1530	1876	1513	945
DAILY FIXED WING AVERAGE SORTIES	VNAF *	103	99	102	163	180	138	132	137	117	142	140	128	121
	ALL BVC	109	146	114	518	588	458	423	409	296	346	400	304	306
CLOSE AIR SUPPORT SORTIES	USA	17205	10541	7498	9190	9818	7903	6222	5135	4792	4049	3643	2377	2464
	USAF **	41	24	22	90	65	57	23	35	31	68	67	87	49
	VNAF ***	90	94	95	94	97	98	96	99	99	100	99	97	99
CLOSE AIR SUPPORT CONTRIBUTION	USAF ****	2	6	2	32	37	32	18	20	13	37	23	15	27
	VNAF ****	98	89	98	34	39	39	58	62	68	55	46	53	54

* VNAF DAILY AVERAGE ATTACK SORTIES
 ** PERCENT OF USAF ATTACK SORTIES EXPENDED IN CLOSE AIR SUPPORT
 *** PERCENT OF VNAF ATTACK SORTIES EXPENDED IN CLOSE AIR SUPPORT
 **** PERCENT OF TOTAL CLOSE AIR SUPPORT EFFORT (ALL SERVICES) (PERCENTAGE FLOWN BY USN/USMC NOT SHOWN)

SOUTH VIETNAM TOTAL SORTIES (ALL AIR ASSETS)

	1972												1973
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
USAF (TACAIR)	13,285	10,954	8,228	14,998	18,078	13,468	12,164	11,031	7,446	8,573	7,625	5,122	3,380
VNAF	71,336	83,706	75,784	73,193	69,469	67,993	61,132	69,519	57,361	67,472	72,977	69,080	60,180
USN	12	690	128	5,470	3,784	2,642	2,223	2,201	1,739	2,170	2,775	2,323	3,911
USMC	0	0	0	681	1,486	1,967	2,036	1,920	1,408	1,795	2,333	1,754	1,028
USA	184,336	132,930	114,242	94,264	106,686	88,186	80,609	70,504	63,298	64,119	50,379	39,029	38,242
RAAF	358	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	271,347	210,358	198,392	188,606	199,503	173,856	158,184	155,175	131,252	142,124	136,089	117,308	106,741

Source: PACAF SEASIA Air Summary

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however, the total USAF sorties flown in SEA increased during these same months (Fig. 1-1). Thus, the decline in the USAF sorties in South Vietnam reflects three things: a reduction in USAF assets in South Vietnam, a growing capacity on the part of VNAF to assume the close air support role, and the diversion of USAF aircraft to the interdiction campaign. This was heightened by the visual sighting of enemy tanks within South Vietnam for the

first time since early 1971, which was interpreted as further indication of the enemy intention to launch an offensive.

(S) This same trend shows in the steady increase in B-52 sorties within South Vietnam—from 280 in January, to 481 in February, and 689 in March—directed primarily against troop and supply concentrations, enemy defense networks, and lines of communication (Fig. 1-2).

B-52 (ARC LIGHT) SORTIES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

B-52	1972												1973
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN
MR 1	89	319	325	554	825	1503	1962	1669	1559	926	913	747	775
MR 2	151	162	364	691	991	503	274	164	218	160	249	221	307
MR 3	0	0	0	363	363	161	108	162	195	688	504	249	415
MR 4	0	0	0	0	44	40	229	312	182	140	101	64	155
SOUTH VIETNAM	240	481	689	1608	2223	2207	2573	2307	2154	1914	1767	1281	1652

Source: PACAF SEASIA Air Summary

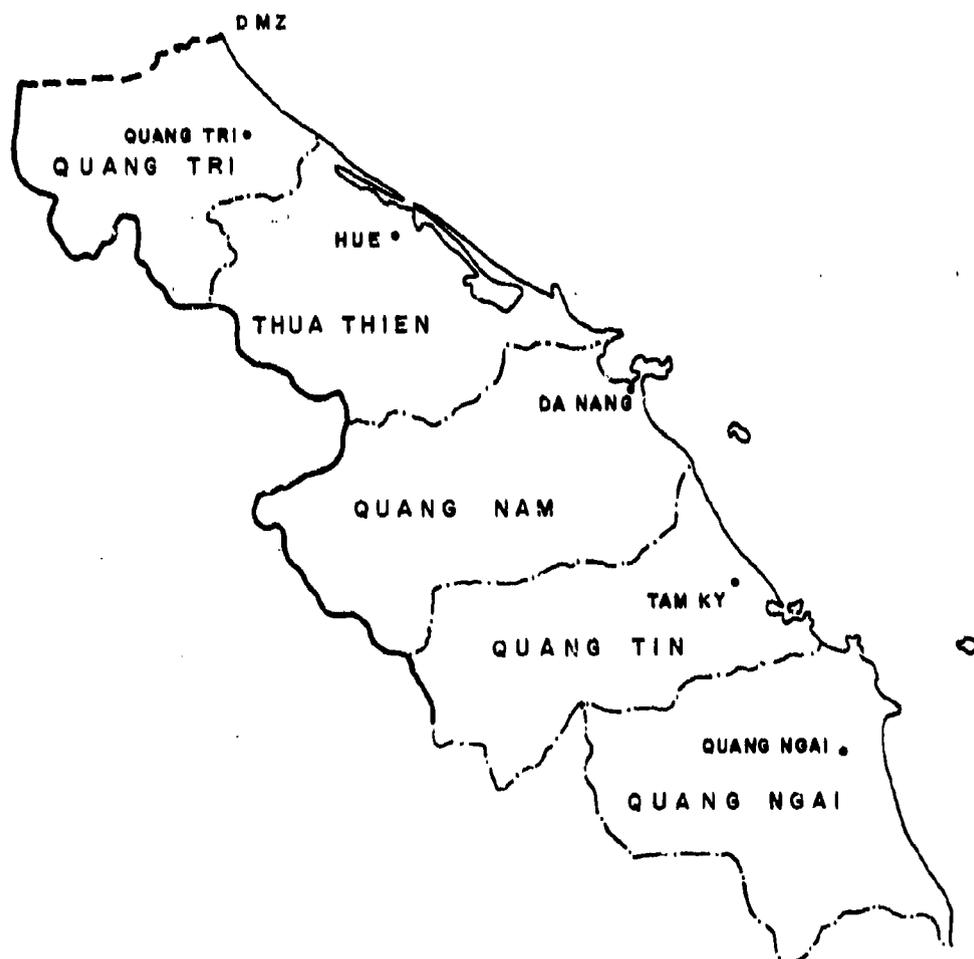
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Source: MACDI

Figure: 1-3

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COMBAT OPERATIONS, JANUARY-MARCH 1972

MILITARY REGION 1

(U) Within South Vietnam enemy activity overall remained light in the first month of the new year, characterized by light attacks-by-fire and limited ground attacks. These appeared to be attempts to pin government forces in place and keep them off balance while preparations were made for future offensive action.

(C) In Military Region 1 (Fig. 1-3) enemy activity generally remained at a low level except in the enemy B-5 Front along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), where activity increased sharply the last few days of the month. Light attacks occurred against friendly forces operating near Fire Support Base (FSB) Fuller and during search operations near Quang Ngai (Fig. 1-4). In an engagement near FSB Fuller a prisoner was taken who identified himself as a member of the 3d Battalion, 246th NVA Regiment. He stated that the battalion had been conducting reconnaissance missions around the fire base and that tactical activity was to be initiated south of the central DMZ in the near future. In northeastern Quang Tri Province activity increased significantly on 29 January when elements of the NVA 84th Artillery and 31st Infantry Regiments conducted mixed rocket and mortar attacks and one ground assault against ARVN units and installations generally east of FSB A-4. A prisoner and captured documents indicated that elements of the 270th NVA Regiment also were involved. In western Quang Tri Province enemy construction activity continued on the route network. In response to this intelligence Route 9 was temporarily interdicted by air strikes, but the road remained in use as the enemy's main supply route in the province. Sensor activations and visual reconnaissance indicated that there was increased enemy logistical activity in the A Shau Valley. MACV J2 estimated that the enemy was apparently trying to extend the trafficability of Route 548 from Ta Bat to points farther south. In the enemy Military Region 5, which included the South Vietnamese Military Region 1 provinces of Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai, two prisoners provided information on the enemy's projected phase of accelerated activity. The campaign, they said, was to be divided into two phases. The first phase would consist primarily of reconnaissance activities and attack preparations and would include part of January and early February. The second phase was to extend from mid-February through March and would consist of larger operations, probably in the Da Nang area. MACV J2 estimated that enemy activity during February in Military Region 1 would remain at a low level until the Tet holidays ended in mid-

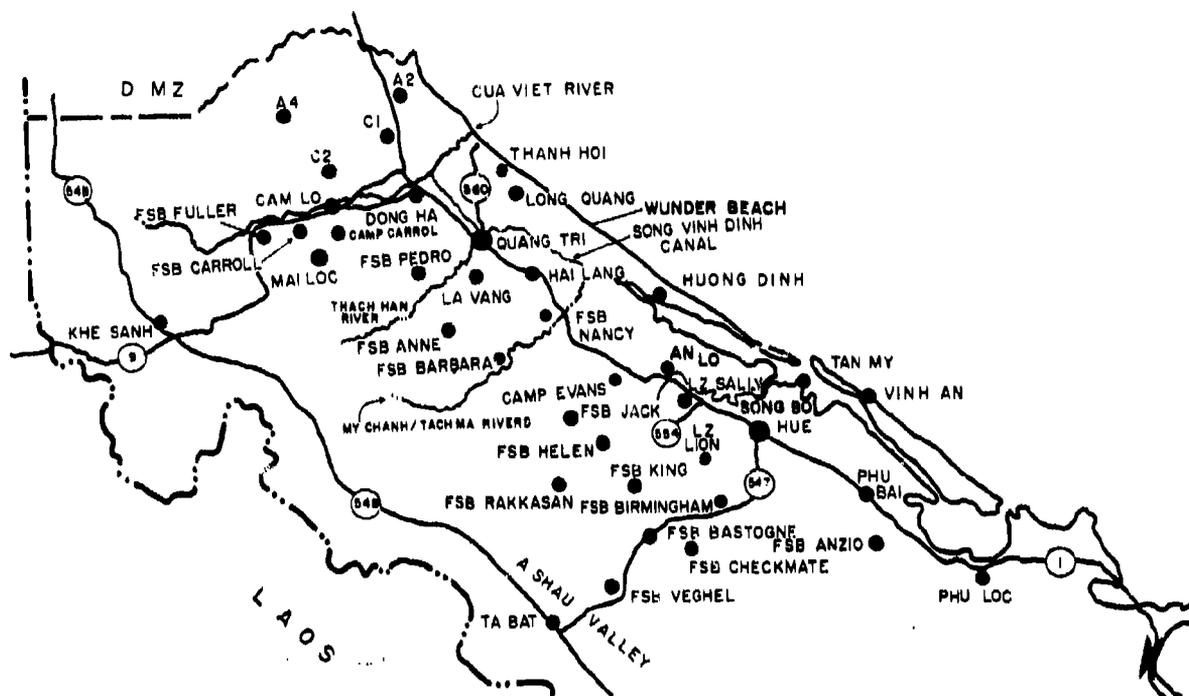
February. The second half of the month would probably be characterized by increased terrorism and sapper attacks on limited objectives in an attempt to discredit the Vietnamization program.

(C) During January ARVN activity also remained at a relatively low level throughout Military Region 1. In Quang Nam Province, however, a joint Vietnamese regular army, ranger, and Territorial Force operation began on 31 December 1971. The control headquarters for the task force was the 1st ARVN Division. The maneuver forces were the 51st Infantry Regiment with its three battalions, the 1st Ranger Group with three battalions, and all of the Regional and Popular Forces in the province. When the operation terminated on 31 January 1972, reports showed that 462 enemy had been killed, 190 taken prisoner, and that 157 individual and eight crew-served weapons had been captured. Friendly losses were 59 killed and 244 wounded.

(C) The month of February began with enemy activity at a generally low level throughout Military Region 1. A noticeable rise occurred during mid-month, but activity returned to a low level by the end of the month. Near the DMZ enemy-initiated activity remained at a relatively constant low level characterized by light attacks-by-fire directed against friendly forces operating in northeast Quang Tri Province. The enemy continued to improve his road network in the northwest and central sections of Quang Tri Province in preparation for the future operations from these areas. Visual reconnaissance, photography, and sensors indicated that enemy resupply and replacement activities were proceeding apace. In both Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces the level of enemy initiated activity increased sharply during the Tet period. The enemy conducted attacks-by-fire against fire support bases and the populated areas of Hue and Phu Bai. Visual reconnaissance and sensors revealed the continued movement of supplies and personnel through the A Shau Valley with subsequent movement eastward, probably by elements of the 5th and 6th NVA Regiments. Elements of these two regiments were also identified in eastern Thua Thien Province. A prisoner captured near Hue identified himself as a member of the 126th Naval Sapper Regiment and stated that he was on a reconnaissance mission. This higher level of activity suggested that some enemy units in northern Military Region 1 had received replacements and supplies in preparation for increased tactical activities. Along the coastal region of northern Military Region 1 increased enemy activity during the Tet holidays was characterized by attacks-by-fire

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Source: MACMH

Figure: 1-4

against Territorial Forces, outposts, and district headquarters.

(C) Although allied combat activity remained light, operations designed to pre-empt the expected enemy offensive were initiated. On 7 February the 3d ARVN Division conducted a one-day, three battalion raid into the DMZ north of FSB A-2. Several recently abandoned platoon positions were found in addition to various munitions and weapons. After Tet, on 21 February, the 2d ARVN Division began a six battalion operation in the Que Son mountain region and adjacent areas. By the end of the month government forces had killed 261 enemy and captured 27; 22 South Vietnamese troops were killed and 39 wounded. On the same day that the 2d Division operation began, the 69th Ranger Border Defense Battalion executed a hasty ambush against an enemy company in Quang Ngai Province. Operation HIEP DONG 12, which had begun on 30 January, was ended on 18 February. This operation involved all of the Regional and Popular Forces in Quang Tin Province. The final results were 89 enemy troops killed and 19 captured. The local forces lost 15 dead and suffered 38 wounded.

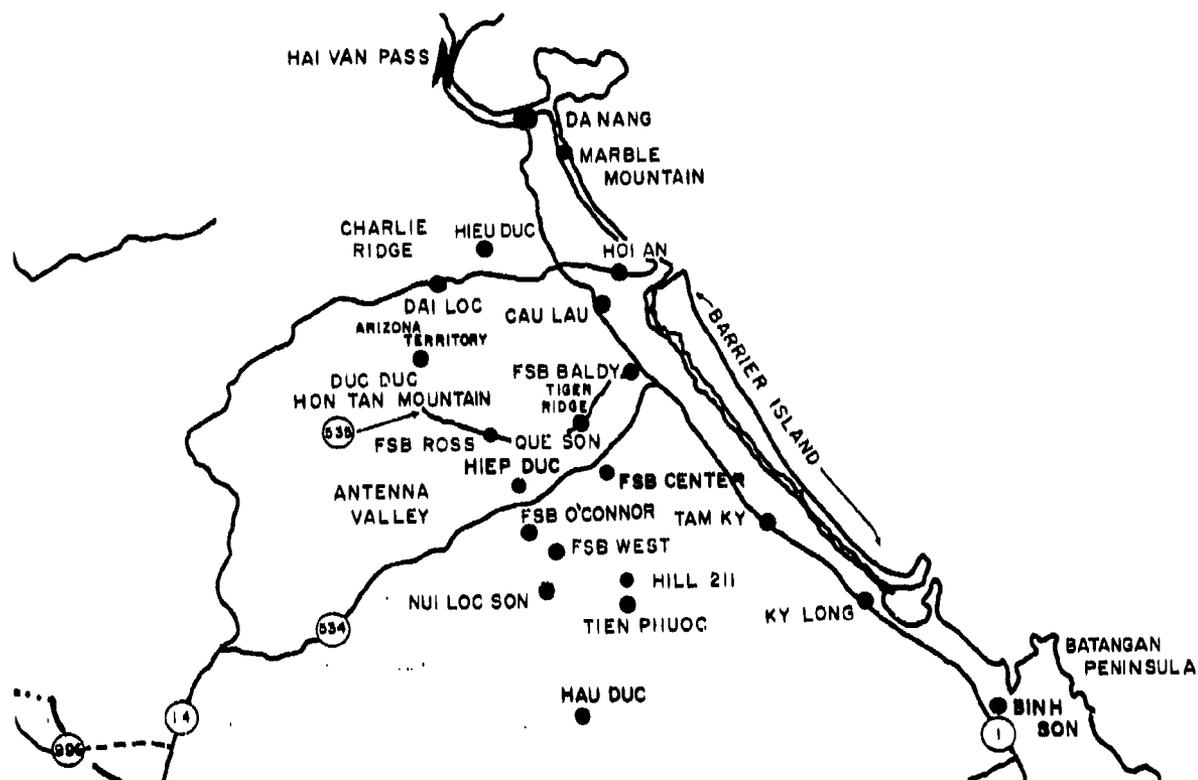
(C) Although the enemy activity remained light to moderate throughout the Republic in March, there were increasing indications of an impending offen-

sive. The enemy continued to strengthen his logistical stockpiles and move his troops into position. Increased military activity all along the northern borders of Military Region 1 were noted and reports indicated that he had infiltrated troops and materiel southward through the DMZ. There were coordinated attacks and harassment conducted against government and allied troops. These activities, taken together with captured documents and interrogation of prisoners, lent support to the belief that a large scale offensive was imminent. Enemy initiated incidents increased by about 30 percent compared with Military Region 1 rose from light to moderate, except south of DMZ, where the enemy opened his long expected offensive as the month ended. In western Quang Tri Province the enemy continued to increase his antiaircraft and artillery capability to the preceding month.

(C) As March progressed enemy activity in Military Region 1 increased to moderate level. Photographs revealed the existence of enemy artillery and tanks three to four kilometers north of the DMZ during the month. In northwestern Military Region 1, enemy-initiated activity increased to a moderate level. The majority of this activity was concentrated in the FSB Veghel area and was characterized by attacks-by-fire and ground attacks

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 1.5

against friendly forces and positions. Signs of enemy truck movement were reported east from the A Shau Valley to points within three to five kilometers north-northwest of Veghel. According to agent reports, 70 to 100 patients in an enemy medical station north of the A Shau Valley were casualties of B-52 strikes; another hospital containing air strike casualties was located in southwest Thua Thien Province. In southeast Thua Thien Province there were three mining incidents on the Hue to Da Nang railroad. Friendly operations resulted in the deaths of several key enemy commanders and staff officers. The loss of these personnel contributed to the disruption of the enemy's timetable for increased activity in this part of South Vietnam. In western Quang Tin Province photography indicated that enemy engineers were attempting to link Routes 980 and 14 with a trellised road (Fig. 1-5). According to both sensors and observers, enemy traffic on the route network increased. Tactical activity was characterized by attacks-by-fire against Territorial Forces and district headquarters.

(C) Friendly combat operations in Military Re-

gion 1 rose to a moderate level over the preceding month until 30 March, when activity became intense in northern Quang Tri Province. Throughout March all three I Corps divisions had major offensive operations underway to relieve enemy pressure; to preempt his preparations for an offensive; and to improve the ARVN posture for further combat movements. The most significant of these operations was initiated by the 1st ARVN Division, targeted against enemy movement out of the A Shau Valley into the staging area north of Route 547. On 6 March the division inserted a battalion to conduct bomb damage assessment of B-52 strikes made the previous day. The battalion received heavy ground fire on their planned landing zone and the insertion was aborted. The 1st ARVN Division reacted rapidly to the discovery of the enemy in this area by reorienting the planned operation to the south in the vicinity of FSB Veghel and Bastogne on both sides of Route 547. The 3d Regiment of the division met immediate opposition as the enemy made a determined effort to force the withdrawal of the 1st Division units from this area. Ground contacts increased in intensity through 18

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March. In two battles fought by the 2d Battalion, 3d Regiment on 17 and 18 March, the enemy lost a total of 182 killed; friendly losses were 15 killed and 66 wounded. B-52 strikes were particularly effective, resulting in 131 enemy killed.

(C) Beginning on 30 March, the enemy initiated heavy attacks-by-fire and ground attacks against all friendly installations in the Gio Linh, Cam Lo, and My Loc districts of Quang Tri Province. The long-awaited enemy offensive had begun.



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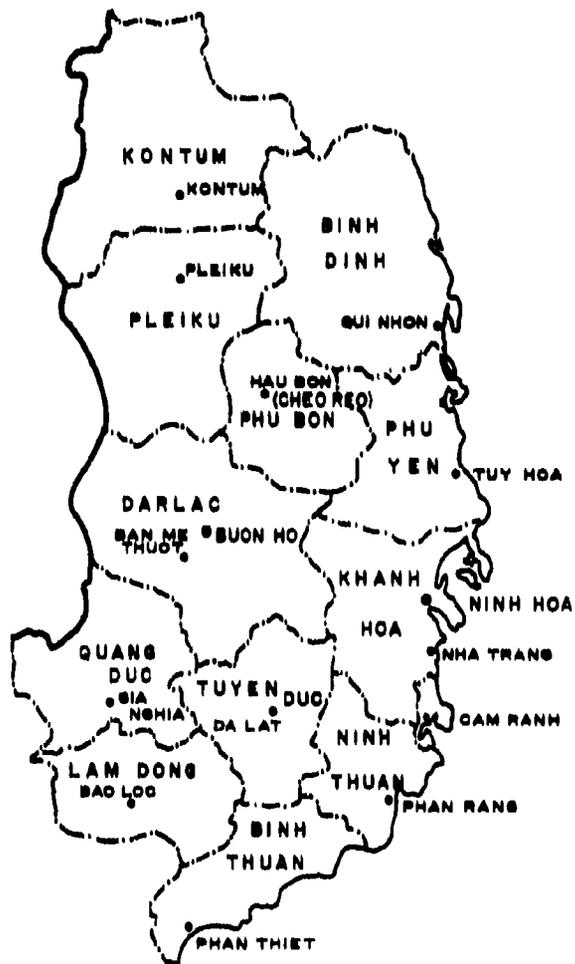
A VNAF helicopter unleashes suppressive fire to protect departing transport helicopters.

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MILITARY REGION 2



Source: MACDI

Figure: 1-6

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MILITARY REGION 2

(C) In Military Region 2 enemy initiated activity during January generally remained at a low level in the Highlands, while activity in the coastal provinces was higher (Fig. 1-6). In the enemy B-8 Front (the South Vietnamese provinces of Kontum, Pleiku, and Darlac) interrogation of a rallier from the 28th NVA Regiment yielded information on the intentions of the regiment for the Tet period, including plans to employ tanks and artillery against the Ben Het Ranger Camp (Fig. 1-7). In Pleiku Province a prisoner from the Gia Lai Provincial Unit revealed possible enemy plans for attacks in the area, including the movement of the 95B NVA Regiment into a staging area east of Pleiku City for attacks on local installations and villages. In southern Military Region 5 (South Vietnamese Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, and Khanh Hoa Provinces), enemy activity increased slightly. On 8 January Qui Nhon City was the target of a major terrorist incident. In Phu Yen Province there was an increase in ground attacks and attacks-by-fire early in February. In Khanh Hoa Province, friendly installations at Cam Ranh Bay received two attacks-by-fire on 16 January, followed by a sapper attack. In the enemy Military Region 10 (southwestern South Vietnamese Military Region 2) a number of reports pointed toward an increase in enemy activity around Dalat City during the Tet period.

(C) The MACV J2 anticipated that enemy activity would increase sharply in February, coinciding with the Tet holidays and the period of low lunar illumination. The enemy was expected to begin his offensive during the month.

(C) During January friendly forces were active in Military Region 2. On 1 January the South Vietnamese changed the name of an ongoing operation from QUANG TRUNG II/4 to Operation BAC BINH VUONG I for the second phase, which continued in western Kontum and Pleiku Provinces. The results of the operation through January were 152 enemy killed, 80 taken prisoner, and 19 individual and three crew-served weapons captured. Friendly forces had lost 24 men killed and 65 wounded.

(C) The Republic of Korea forces began Operation DONG BO 18 with the 30th Regiment in Khanh Hoa Province. The operation ended on 26 January with only one Korean soldier killed. One hundred and twenty-four of the enemy were killed and 80 individual and seven crew-served weapons captured. The Koreans also initiated Operation DO KAI BI 2-1 with the 28th Regiment on 11 January in Phu Yen Province. The operation terminated twelve days later with 56 enemy killed and 21 individual and two crew-served weapons captured at a loss of 20 Koreans killed and 20 wounded. In

Binh Dinh Province on 5 January 1972, the 28th Korean Regiment began Operation JAE 640-1. Ending on 16 January, the operation resulted in 63 enemy killed, one captured, and 36 individual and five crew-served weapons captured. Two Korean soldiers were killed and three were wounded.

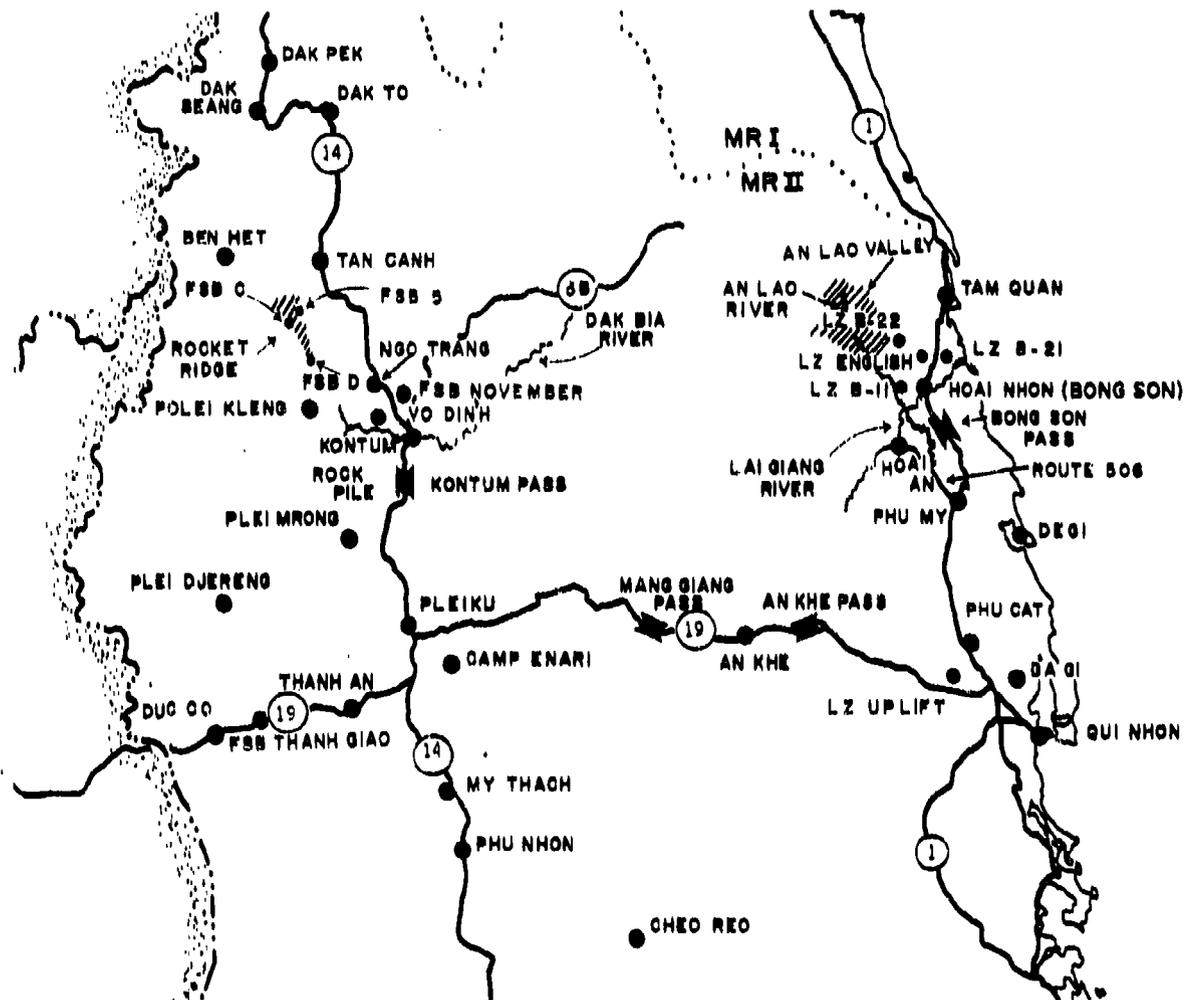
(C) Enemy activity increased slightly during February. Prisoners captured in Kontum Province provided information on a new infiltration group, reportedly subordinate to the 320th NVA Division. The enemy stepped up activity along Route 14 south to Dak To. The units involved were probably elements of the K-2 Battalion, 28th NVA Regiment. Highway 14 was also attacked north of Pleiku City, probably by elements of the 1st Battalion, 95B NVA Regiment. Other documents captured revealed the probable presence in western Military Region 2 of elements of the 88d NVA Engineer Regiment. In Binh Dinh Province allied installations and friendly hamlets near Route 19 were struck by sapper and mortar attacks on 8 and 19 February. From 10 to 13 February Vietnamese army defenders of an outpost north of Phu My received ground attacks and attacks-by-fire. On 25 February an American convoy was ambushed near Mang Giang Pass. In Khanh Hoa Province on 8 February a Vietnamese army compound north of Nha Trang received an attack-by-fire followed by a sapper attack. From 21 to 23 February two compounds near Qui Nhon City received ground probes and attacks-by-fire. On 21 February, in Ninh Thuan Province, Phan Rang Air Base was attacked by fire.

(C) To counter the increase in enemy activity and to preempt the expected enemy thrust through the Central Highlands, Korean and Vietnamese forces conducted several combat operations. In two operations terminating in early February, the Korean troops accounted for 286 enemy killed while losing six Koreans killed and 31 wounded. In four operations begun in 1971 and terminated in time for the Tet holidays, the ARVN had killed 611 enemy soldiers and captured 404. Friendly casualties were 50 killed and 120 wounded.

(C) During March enemy initiated incidents began at a low level and increased slightly. On 26 March documents captured north of Ben Het identified the enemy force in the area as the 141st Regiment, 2d NVA Division. This was probably the enemy unit which had been in contact sporadically during the month with a Vietnamese army force near Ben Het. Two prisoners and a rallier from the 64th Regiment, 320th NVA Division, provided information regarding their regiment. Contacts on the 22d and 28th of March along Rocket Ridge tended to confirm the unit locations given by these sources. Prisoners captured in west central Kontum Province indicated the presence of four enemy infantry

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 1-7

battalions with two supporting artillery battalions. These prisoners were taken during the longest contact between enemy and government forces in Military Region 2 within a year; a battle site 31 kilometers north of Kontum City. These sources were in accord that an offensive was imminent in western Military Region 2; that the offensive would probably begin in April and last approximately one month; and that the target would be Kontum City, Vietnamese army outposts, and friendly fire support bases along Route 14. Enemy resupply activity continued from the Khmer Republic eastward; on 11 March a Russian-made truck carrying food supplies and equipment was captured. Interdiction of lines of communication continued at a slightly increased level in western Military Region 2, particularly along Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum

City. A rallyer on 29 March gave information that led to a heavy engagement between ARVN rangers and enemy forces on 30 March 1972. Sapper and indirect fire attacks increased through the month. A bridge was heavily damaged and an ARVN convoy was ambushed northwest of Ninh Hoa City. A prisoner taken in southeastern Military Region 2 indicated that enemy forces were planning increased tactical activity in the Dalat area. All the evidence pointed toward a large scale, multi-battalion offensive in northwestern Military Region 2.

(C) Although the senior American and South Vietnamese officials in Military Region 2 believed that a major enemy offensive would occur soon, friendly combat activity in the II Corps area remained light during March. The 2d ARVN Airborne

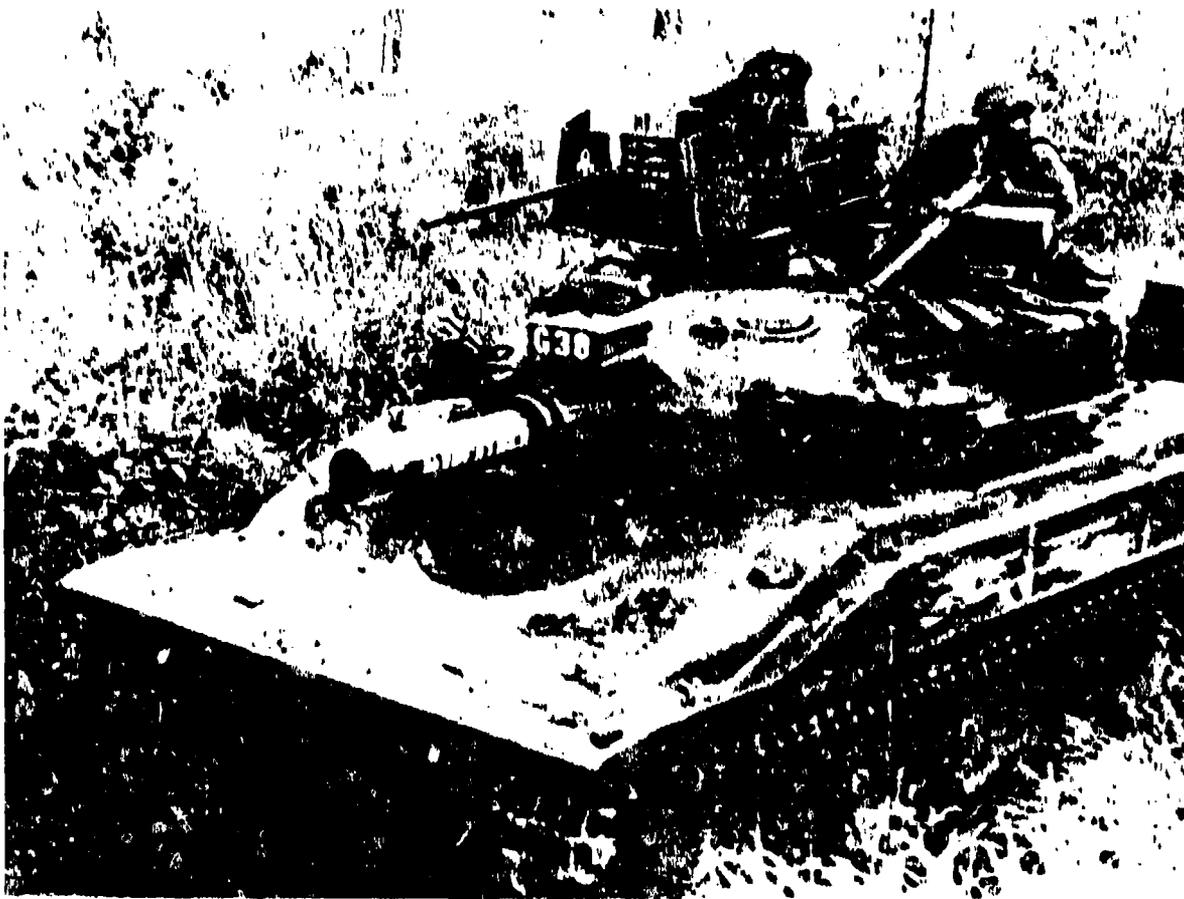
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Brigade, with three battalions, of the Joint General Staff general reserve, was moved by the Vietnamese Air Force to Peiku from Saigon on 4 and 5 March and conveyed to Vo Dinh on 6 March. The brigade was placed under the operational control of the 22d ARVN Division, assigned an area of operations, and given the mission of destroying elements of the 320th NVA Division. The most significant contact by the airborne brigade occurred on 13 March when elements of the brigade engaged part of the enemy division it was seeking. The engagement continued intermittently for nine hours. The airborne soldiers were supported by ARVN artillery and Vietnamese tactical air.

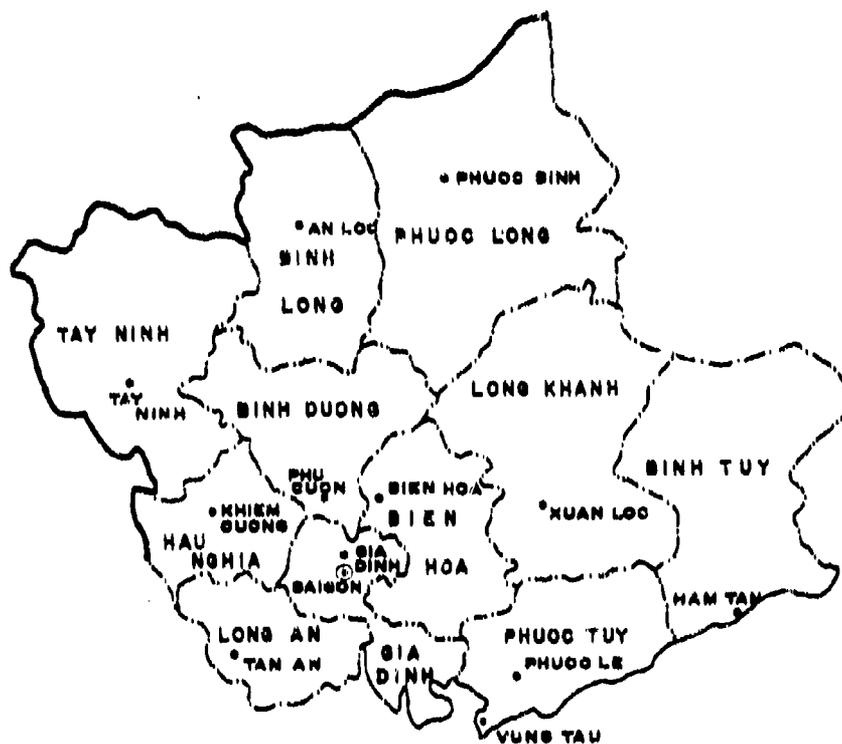
(C) Other friendly units in western Kontum Province continuously patrolled and conducted bomb damage assessment throughout their areas of responsibility. The most noteworthy incident occurred on 22 March when American air cavalry elements on a bomb damage assessment mission discovered

110 enemy bodies in an area where 70 structures and four bunkers had been destroyed. The next day the 23d Ranger Battalion combat assaulted into the area to conduct further search operations. The battalion remained in the landing zone area overnight and the following morning began receiving mortar and small arms fire. The fighting continued throughout the day with South Vietnamese artillery and tactical air in support of the rangers. The enemy covered the landing zone with antiaircraft fire, making resupply and evacuation of wounded difficult. On 25 March the 11th Ranger Battalion began moving toward the battle area to join and reinforce the 23d. The 23d Ranger Battalion remained in contact until 28 March when it left the area overland and moved to link up with the 11th Rangers. The cumulative results for the operation, including those killed by air or artillery, were 180 enemy dead, with 18 rangers killed, 20 missing, and 82 wounded. The month ended without the anticipated enemy offensive materializing.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 1-8

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MILITARY REGION 3

(C) In Military Region 3 during the month of January enemy activity increased slightly although the overall level remained low. Activity was characterized by enemy concern over provisions and plans for future tactical activities in selected areas. There was an increase in enemy ground probes against American and South Vietnamese military bases after 18 January. In Tay Ninh Province agent reports indicated that the enemy was possibly attempting to gather and position foodstuffs prior to executing their planned tactical activity in the province (Fig. 1-8). On 27 January a sizeable contact followed by eight air strikes the following day killed 35 enemy troops. The day after that another contact and subsequent air strikes killed 20 enemy soldiers, resulting in the capture of a quantity of miscellaneous munitions and the destruction of two newly constructed enemy base camps. A 19 January sapper attack at the ARVN Cu Chi Ranger Camp destroyed 31.5 tons of ordnance (Fig. 1-9). An attack-by-fire followed by a ground attack on a South Vietnamese night defense position 11 kilometers north-northwest of Cu Chi resulted in 16 enemy dead. Of significance during the month were several reports that dealt with enemy preparations for increased tactical activity in Long An Province. A rallier and three prisoners revealed that their unit, the Viet Cong Duc Hoa District Local Force Unit, had been directed by the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN)—the major enemy headquarters in the southern part of the Republic of Vietnam—to conduct combat activity after Tet against the Bao Trai provincial headquarters in Hau Nghia Province. A document captured on 23 January 1972 disclosed two planned phases of enemy activity in Military Region 3. The first phase, from 22 to 30 January, was for preparation and consolidation. The second phase was one of operations, with local force enemy units conducting attacks on 14 and 21 February. The enemy headquarters in the vicinity of Ba Ria instructed its subordinate units to increase their tactical activity in order to relieve the ARVN pressure against rear service units which were transporting food and ammunition through the area.

(C) In Military Region 3 the South Vietnamese initiated Operation TOAN THANG 01/71NG, Phase VIII. All III Corps units were returned to South Vietnam from the Krek (Khmer) area by the middle of January. This shift of forces was made to increase security within Military Region 3 by assuming responsibility for the areas vacated by redeploying Free World Military Assistance Forces and to prepare for the dry season campaign. The 3d Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) relinquished its areas of responsibility in Binh Tuy, Long Khanh, and Phuoc Tuy Provinces to concen-

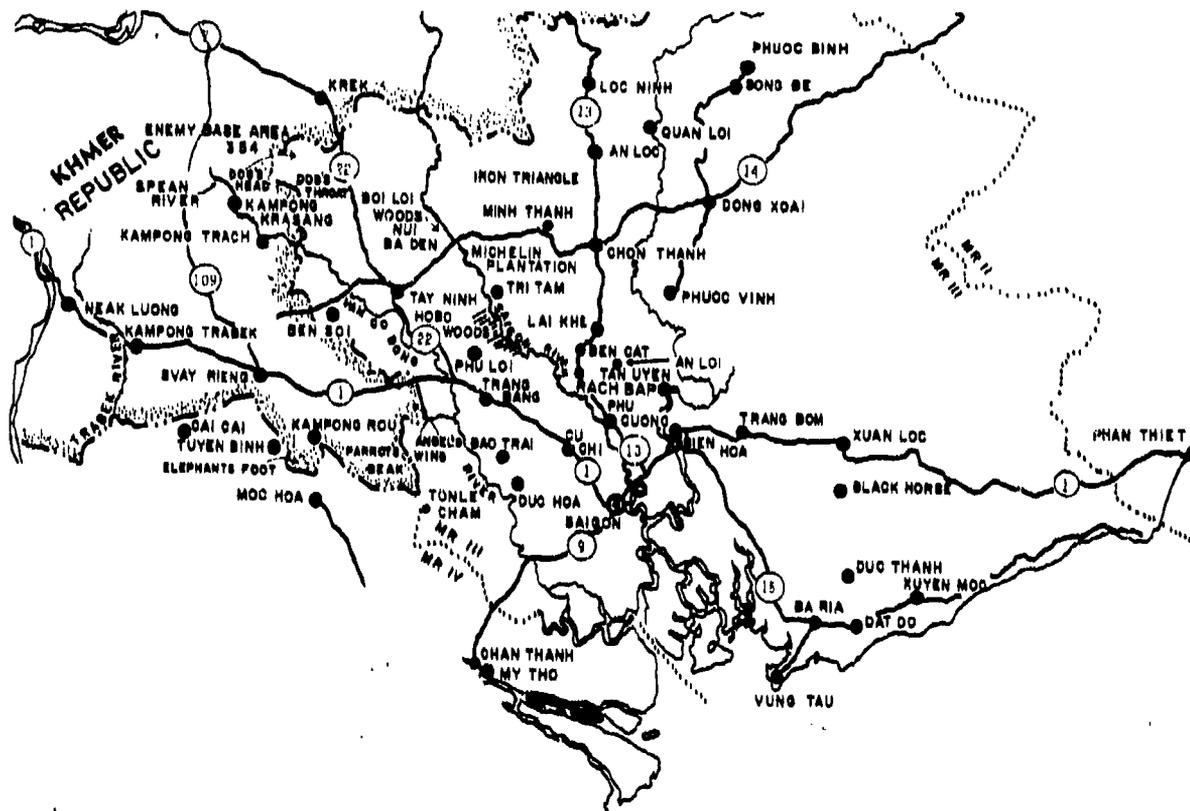
trate on the security of the Saigon-Long Binh-Bien Hoa complex. The 18th ARVN Division and Territorial Forces assumed control of the vacated areas. The 25th ARVN Division was given responsibility for the northern portion of Tay Ninh Province. The 5th ARVN Division area of responsibility remained relatively unchanged, with its primary focus along Route 13 from the Capital Military District to the Khmer border north of Loc Ninh. Both the 25th and 5th Divisions positioned units along the border in a mobile offense posture and operated on both sides of the border to interdict enemy movement and disrupt the enemy's preparations before Tet. The III Corps Ranger Command activated a tactical command post at Cu Chi to control the III Corps Mobile Strike Force, consisting of the 3d and 5th Ranger Groups, the 3d Armored Cavalry Brigade, and the 49d Infantry Regiment. The intensity of friendly operations increased during the month, although combat activity and enemy contact remained at a low level. South Vietnamese forces conducted small scale operations across the border into the Khmer Republic for short periods of time without significant contact.

(C) Although the drawdown of American forces was continuing in early 1972, US troops were still engaging the enemy. On 3 January elements of the 1st Cavalry Division made contact with the enemy northeast of Xuan Loc in Long Khanh Province. The American reaction force, helicopter gunships, and medevac support all received heavy enemy fire. Results were one American killed, 14 missing, and four helicopters damaged. In Bien Hoa Province American troop elements received an attack-by-fire that wounded 18 American soldiers and one Vietnamese. At Bien Hoa Air Base on 12 January, a sapper attack in the munitions storage area caused the loss of several hundred tons of ammunition.

(C) Enemy activity increased after 19 February, although the overall level remained low throughout the month. The activity was characterized by reactions to friendly operations and by logistical efforts in preparation for increased tactical activity following the Tet holidays. Although major elements remained in the Khmer Republic, agent reports indicated that some small reconnaissance, sapper, and rear service units were operating in the border areas of Tay Ninh and Binh Long Provinces. These agent reports were somewhat substantiated by documents and a prisoner captured in February. Vietnamese army and Territorial Forces in Tay Ninh and Binh Duong Provinces were targets for increased attacks-by-fire. Heavy ground-to-air firings on 12 February indicated the presence of an unknown-size enemy force positioned adjacent to Routes 13, 14, and 15 in the Iron Triangle area; 13 helicopters had been damaged

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 1-9

since 20 January in this area. In Long An Province, Republic of Vietnam hamlet offices were the targets of increased enemy pressure; 17 Vietnamese were killed and 25 wounded in these attacks. Phu Loi and Bien Hoa airfields received attacks-by-fire during February, wounding seven Americans. Although there were no terrorist incidents in Saigon during February, there were several reports concerning enemy plans to infiltrate sappers into the city to destroy bridges, interdict lines of communication, and destroy aircraft at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. An agent reported that the Tet holiday period was to be used for increased logistical activity and troop deployment for increased tactical activity after 20 February. According to the agent the activity was to be localized in nature and no general offensive would occur until late June.

(C) Operation TOAN THANG continued with III Corps forces conducting increased offensive operations to keep the enemy off balance and prevent him from threatening Saigon and other major population centers during the Tet period. Only one operation across the border into the Khmer Republic

was conducted. The 8d Armored Cavalry Brigade moved from Ben Sol by road and the 65th Ranger Border Defense Battalion air assaulted into landing zones across the border to exploit a VNAF sighting of the enemy. Only light contact resulted and friendly forces returned to South Vietnam after a one day search. In other parts of the Corps area South Vietnamese units intensified offensive and security operations in efforts to thwart any enemy initiatives during the Tet period and immediately afterward. The Corps Mobile Strike Force focused its operations on the Saigon River corridor and along infiltration routes leading to the Capital Military District from the west. The 5th ARVN Division conducted operations primarily along Route 13. The 18th ARVN Division conducted both security and battalion offensive operations in Long Khanh and Phouc Tuy Provinces. Enemy forces were encountered on several of these forays; however, most contacts were insignificant. The 25th ARVN Division continued mobile company offensive operations along Route 22 and in the border areas north and northwest of Tay Ninh. No significant contacts

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occurred in this area of operations. The 3d Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, continued dynamic defense operations in the Long Binh-Bien Hoa rocket belt and southeast of Xuan Loc. The brigade had several small contacts with elements of the 38d NVA Regiment south of Xuan Loc.

(C) Enemy activity remained low overall in March, characterized by limited ground attacks, sporadic attacks-by-fire, and sapper probes directed against Territorial Forces and lines of communication. In Binh Long Province there was one ground contact and a sapper attack against an ARVN night defensive position nine kilometers west-southwest of An Loc. Later, on March 26, two contacts at the northern and southern extremities of the Song Be River infiltration corridor resulted in 18 enemy killed, two individual weapons, and 11 tons of rice captured.

(C) Enemy activity was most severe in Tay Ninh Province, which led the American and Vietnamese commanders to suspect that this area would be the focal point for the expected offensive. On 7 March ARVN and Regional Forces received attacks-by-fire in two separate incidents. On 11 March, a Regional Force field position nine kilometers south-southwest of Tay Ninh received an attack-by-fire consisting of 100 rounds of mixed rocket, mortar, and recoilless rifle fire followed by a ground attack by an estimated two companies. Sapper attacks occurred on 21 March against the ARVN Trang Lon Base Camp in Tay Ninh City West and a ferry at Ben Soi village, seven kilometers southwest of Tay Ninh. Tay Ninh West also received 25 rounds of rocket fire. Several days later, on 23 March, 440 pounds of TNT were discovered on the Vam Co Dong River 1.5 kilometers northwest of the Go Dau Ha bridge. Vietnamese army forces four kilometers east of Lai Khe engaged an enemy squad

on 25 March. Later the same day three sappers attempted to penetrate the perimeter of Lai Khe Base Camp.

(C) Friendly operations continued to keep the enemy forces off balance and to disrupt their logistical and replacement activities. From 9 to 30 March III Corps conducted a multi-regimental operation across the Khmer border in the enemy Base Area 354 west of the Dog's Head. Units participating included the 3d Armored Brigade; 3d, 4th, and 5th Ranger Groups; and the 46th Infantry Regiment. On 9 March the 3d Armored Brigade and elements of the 3d Ranger Group moved into the Khmer by way of Route 1 to Svay Rieng. The force then turned north on Route 109. The remaining elements of the 3d Ranger Group were lifted by helicopter to positions along Route 109. The task force attacked north and seized Kampong Trach without significant enemy contact. The 46th Regiment operated across the border in the vicinity of the Dog's Throat initially, then moved by helicopter to positions west of Kampong Krasang. The 3d Armored Brigade task force continued northwest from Kampong Trach with little enemy resistance and conducted search operations west of the Spean River. B-52 strikes to the east of the Spean River uncovered a substantial bunker and tunnel complex. Portions of the complex were searched by the 46th Regiment. Enemy contact throughout the operation was sporadic. The most significant results were the large caches of rice, salt, and weapons captured, primarily in the vicinity of Kampong Krasang; 748 enemy were killed and 29 captured, 1,114 individual and 36 crew-served weapons were captured, and 871 tons of rice and 48.5 tons of salt were seized. The South Vietnamese lost eight killed and 86 wounded. All government forces returned to South Vietnam by 30 March.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 1-10

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MILITARY REGION 4

(C) In Military Region 4, enemy activity remained at a generally low level. The number of attacks-by-fire increased slightly to an average of three per day, compared to two per day during December 1971. Seven outposts were overrun during January; only two had fallen in December. Several agents reported that elements of the Z-15 Regiment (also known as the 88th NVA Regiment) had infiltrated into Dinh Tuong Province (Fig. 1-10). A report was received of a December meeting of ranking enemy Military Region 2 rear service and DT-1 Regiment cadre on the importance of the "shadow supply system" and the need for forming purchasing, collection, and taxation companies in the cities, and taxation companies on important lines of communication. Reports from three Hoi Chanh's (ralliers), when adjusted to include recent losses, indicated that the D-2 VC Regiment strength in Bac Lieu Province was between 1,350 and 1,400 personnel. Agents reported that the 308th Battalion, D-8 Regiment, after having moved into Vinh Long Province in September 1971, had returned to the vicinity of Base Area 487 in northeastern Vinh Binh Province (Fig. 1-11).

(C) The MACV J2 estimated that the enemy planned to increase significantly both the level and intensity of his military, political, and proselyting activities around the time of the Tet holiday period. Dinh Tuong, northwestern Vinh Binh, southern Vinh Long, Phong Dinh, Chuong Thien, southern Kien Giang, and northern An Xuyen Provinces were to be the focal points of this activity. The enemy planned to support his political and proselyting efforts against Government of Vietnam military dependents and civil administrators with a sharp increase in attacks-by-fire, attacks on outposts and government offices, and limited ground attacks against troop field positions.

(C) The Vietnamese army initiated various operations against the enemy in Military Region 4. The 4th Ranger Group began a two-month long operation across the border into the Khmer Republic on 1 December 1971 in the vicinity of Neak Luong. When this operation ended on 31 January 1972, the rangers had accounted for 128 enemy killed, 67 captured, and 54 individual and eight crew-served weapons captured. The group lost nine government soldiers killed and 55 wounded. The 4th Armored Brigade ended a month long operation on 4 January 1972 after having killed 54 of the enemy, captured 42, seized 22 individual and one crew-served weapon. The brigade lost four killed and five wounded. The 7th ARVN Division began phase one of Operation CUU LONG 7 on New Year's Day and terminated it on 15 January 1972.

The results were 111 enemy dead, 34 detained, and 26 individual and four crew-served weapons captured. The division losses were 15 killed and 126 wounded. The second phase of the operation continued in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces through January. The 42d Ranger Group began Operation CUU LONG 44 on 7 January and terminated it eight days later. With no friendly casualties, the rangers accounted for 28 enemy killed, 21 captured, and 30 individual and crew-served weapons captured. Territorial Forces throughout Military Region 4 began Operation DON KHOI on 13 January and terminated it three days later. In this successful operation, 499 enemy were killed, 55 were detained, and 289 individual weapons were captured. The cost of the local forces was not light; 61 were killed, 295 were wounded, and four were missing.

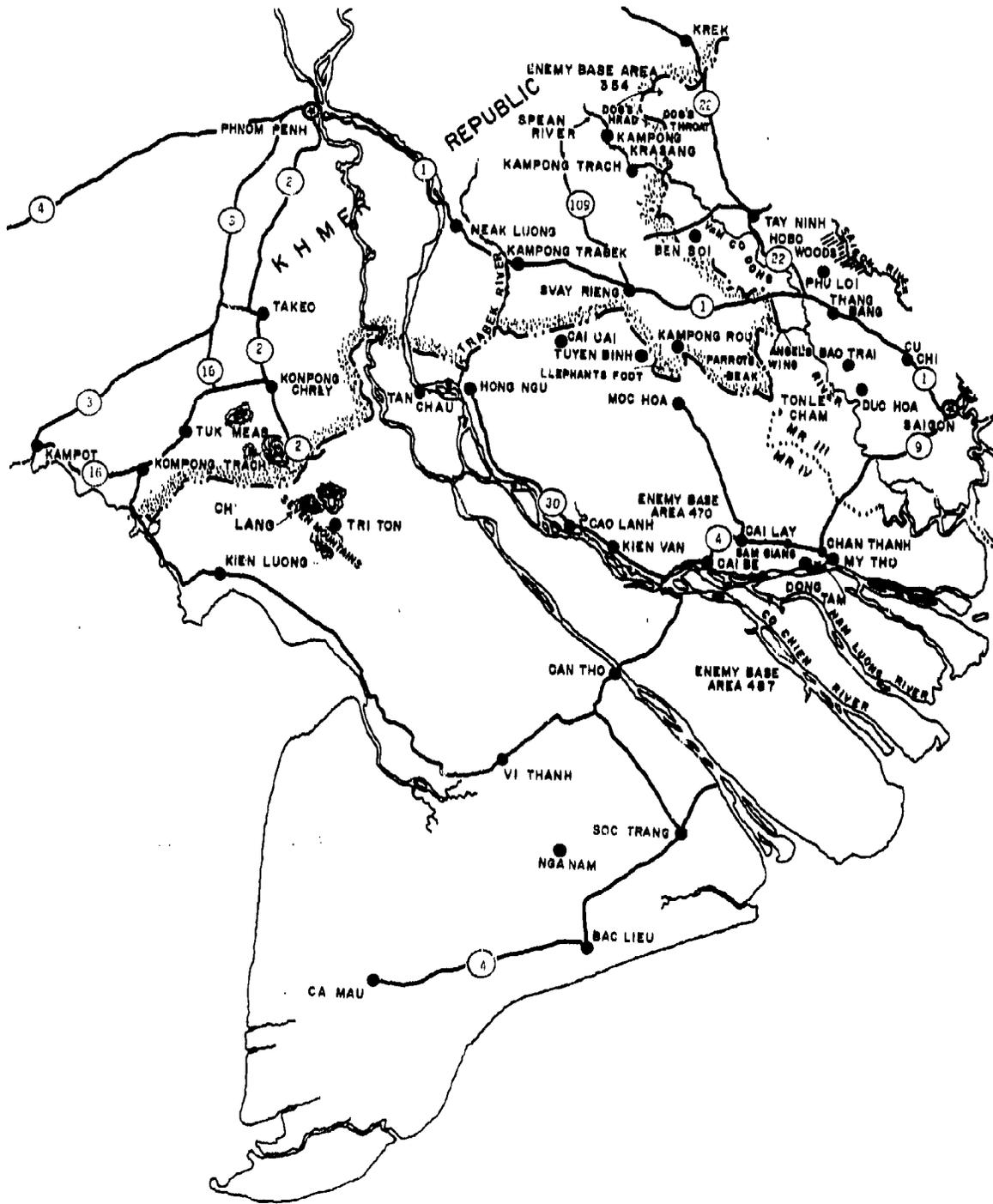
(U) In the month of February the enemy began to place more emphasis on his preparations for the impending large scale offensive that was planned to begin during the Tet holidays. However, continued air attacks, including ARC LIGHT strikes, and preemptive ground combat operations hampered and delayed the enemy's ability to launch this offensive in February. Saigon's announced 24 hour cease-fire for the Tet holiday started 14 February at 1800 hours; the enemy's announced 96 hour cease-fire started the same day at 0100 hours. Enemy activity continued at a low level. After numerous reports of enemy plans to increase his activity before, during, or after the Tet holidays, there was one sharp, but brief, upsurge immediately following the Tet cease-fire period. This high point consisted mainly of light attacks-by-fire and small ground attacks against outposts, troop field positions, and district headquarters. Four outposts were overrun in the 48 hours immediately after the end of the enemy proclaimed cease-fire period. By the end of the month, however, the number of outposts overrun was 18, compared to 28 for the same period the year before. Information was received on the reported infiltration of the Z-15 NVA Regiment, indicating that the regiment would operate in northwestern Dinh Tuong Province. The 281st NVA Sapper Battalion, with a strength of about 200, had infiltrated from the north to operate in northern Kien Hoa Province. Two agents reported that 32 NVA cadres had arrived from the Khmer Republic to survey the coastline between the mouths of the Ham Long and Co Chien rivers to select rendezvous points for North Vietnamese ships and storage sites for offloaded cargo. The most serious incident in the Delta in February occurred in Chuong Thien Province where a Regional Force outpost was overrun on 19 February. There were 59 friendly casualties, 36 of whom were killed—an

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 1-11

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unusually high rate for an overrun outpost. On 20 and 21 February hamlets in Vinh Long and Ba Xuyen Provinces were attacked. Two hamlet chiefs and 33 People's Self Defense Force personnel were killed. On 6 February ARVN and Regional Force elements engaged in a 12-hour fight in Chuong Thien Province. Two prisoners identified the enemy force as the 9th Battalion, D-2 VC Regiment.

(C) To counter enemy activity during February, IV Corps initiated several operations, both in the Delta proper and across the border into the Khmer Republic. The most significant of these was the Corps wide operation DONG KHOI beginning on 7 February and ending on 9 February. The cumulative results were 225 enemy killed and 41 captured; 12 government soldiers were killed and 117 were wounded.

(C) During March the enemy initiated activity remained at a generally low level. The enemy seemed to concentrate his energies upon local disruption of the pacification program rather than upon preparations for major offensive action by large forces. His military actions were characterized by light attacks-by-fire and harassing actions, in addition to small ground attacks against outposts, troop field positions, and district headquarters.

Throughout the Delta ten outposts were overrun, increasing the total for 1972 to 28, nine less than the same period the year before. Evidence of subversion was noted in at least 19 of the overrun outposts, in contrast to a dozen such incidents in the first quarter of 1971. Reports from throughout the Delta indicated that the enemy was stressing the placement of agents in the ranks of outpost defenders. Captured documents also revealed that some enemy battalions had dispersed into squad sized elements to conduct operations. In the first recorded water mining incidents in the Tan Chau area of the Mekong River, four attempts sank two sampans and a cargo vessel and slightly damaged an oil tanker of a Phnom Penh-bound convoy. In another incident a water mine sank a sampan in the northern U Minh Forest area, killing 11 Popular Force soldiers. Sappers destroyed a bridge in Vinh Binh Province and partially damaged another on Route 4 in Phong Dinh Province. An agent indicated that the Viet Cong cadre in the southern Delta were critical of COSVN's passive attitude toward the Government of Vietnam pacification program in An Xuyen Province. Reportedly, the cadre had initiated their own counter-pacification effort.



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ARVN soldiers man a captured Communist T-54 tank.

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CHAPTER 2

NORTH VIETNAMESE

OFFENSIVE AND STABILIZATION: APRIL - JUNE 1972

(U) On 30 March the long-predicted enemy offensive struck with a fury unanticipated by the defenders. Despite the North's official denials, there was no doubt that the North Vietnamese, not the Viet Cong, were attacking, using weapons never before used in South Vietnam. The seriousness with which the North regarded this invasion, and perhaps a hint of their desperation, too, was the use of all active combat divisions against the South, leaving North Vietnam uncovered. The first half of April witnessed the fall of Loc Ninh and the stalling of the Communist drive in Quang Tri Province. President Thieu frequently visited the battle fronts and made television appearances urging civilians and soldiers alike to contribute their utmost in what he described as a decisive stage in losing or surviving. The Vietnamese public outside the contested areas remained calm. There was general relief that the enemy advance had been slowed, but the price in terms of casualties was sobering. Meanwhile, the US decision to resume bombing in North Vietnam around Hanoi and Hai-phong and Secretary Rogers' statement that the US would do everything necessary to save South Vietnam short of reintroducing US troops or using nuclear weapons was calculated to hearten the South Vietnamese and convince the North of our resolution.

(U) The NLF called on the Southerners to assist them in their all-out effort to smash the American's coercive machinery, crush the pacification effort, and topple President Thieu. Despite frequent reports of their defeats of ARVN and claims that pacification had failed, their criticisms of inadequate Viet Cong actions and the decision to resume negotiations in Paris in late April belied the claim of success.

(U) The fall of Quang Tri City on the first of May and lack of good news on the other battle fronts gave rise to increasing apprehension among the urban populace. Despite his energetic visits to various battlefields, President Thieu was criticized by the Saigon press for not doing enough. The gravity of the situation prompted him to replace high-ranking military commanders who had performed poorly during the offensive, declare martial law, and request authority to rule by decree. President Nixon's order to mine the North's harbors had a salutary effect on South Vietnamese public

opinion. By the end of the month, the situation on the battlefield had stabilized, as the North appeared to have run out of steam.

(U) The shrill propaganda of the North and the NLF continued to claim widespread support and great victories in the South. However, Hanoi indicated concern over continued support by the USSR in light of President Nixon's trip to Moscow.

(C) The enemy's introduction into the war of modern tanks, artillery, and other weapons meant that MACV had to reconsider the RVNAF force structure and equipment, retain US air assets which were programmed to redeploy, and increase advisory efforts. During the offensive redeployments continued on schedule with eight US maneuver battalions standing down by 30 June, leaving two in-country. April and May saw over 30,000 US troops leave Vietnam. In addition, Korea's 2d Marine Brigade and 100th Logistics Command, and Headquarters, Royal Thai Forces, Vietnam completed their redeployment. On 26 April President Nixon announced another MACV 20,000 space reduction to a level of 49,000, effective 1 July.

(C) While redeployment and installation turnover continued, MACV rapidly augmented forces to counter the enemy threat. A detachment of US Army aerial delivery specialists arrived to assist the RVNAF in aerial resupply of surrounded forces, such as those in An Loc; the USN increased their ANGLICO; while the USAF and USMC brought additional fighter, airlift, and gunship aircraft in-country. In addition, the US Army and USAF retained air assets previously scheduled for redeployment. Both helicopter and ground mounted antitank missiles were introduced to destroy enemy armor. The Navy added additional carriers to the task force in the Tonkin Gulf. On 15 May MACV reorganized. Headquarters, MACV and Headquarters, 7th AF were merged to accommodate command and control of the expanded air war.

(U) The unprecedented scale of the enemy invasion during April and May left the people and Government of South Vietnam shaken. By the end of June, however, the thrust had been blunted, the RVNAF were retaking lost territory, and public confidence in the South Vietnamese leaders was growing. While pacification had been dealt an initial setback, particularly in those areas where there was heavy combat, the government remained

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ARVN soldiers display a Russian made tank destroyed in the battle for Quang Tri.

intact. The VCI did not surface, as in 1968, to help their NVA comrades, an indicator of the government's increased legitimacy. Refugees constituted the most severe civil problem facing the nation, particularly in Military Region 1 and northern Military Region 2, as pacification was heavily disrupted in those areas. Elsewhere, except for Binh Long Province in Military Region 3 and Chuong Thien Province in Military Region 4, the pace of daily life was near normal.

(U) Terrorism continued generally high throughout the quarter, as the VC used economy of force tactics in Military Regions 3 and 4 to complement the NVA military actions. Both the NVA and VC carried out population abductions in the contested provinces. The performance of the Territorial Forces was uneven. Several battalions of Regional Forces fought a skillful delaying action in Quang Tri Province, withdrawing only after the ARVN had fled. For the most part, the Territorials assumed missions from ARVN units departing for

the major battles or were pulled in to increase province and district capital security. This latter tactic resulted in greatly decreased initiatives against the enemy and unnecessary forfeiture of some territory. By June, however, the government officials were less panicky, and the Territorials were again seizing the initiative.

(U) In May the central government suspended local elections, relying in the future on appointed officials. At corps, province, and district level, new officials were appointed to replace those whose leadership was ineffective in the crisis.

(U) In Military Region 1, almost all pacification programs halted except those dealing with the enemy and refugees. In an admirable display of initiative and effectiveness, officials from the Ministry of Social Welfare organized, fed, and housed nearly 400,000 refugees--about 13 percent of the region's population. The refugees in camps were organized under their uprooted village administrations, and the Quang Tri Province government,

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established in Thua Thien Province, was planning the post-hostilities reconstruction of the province.

(U) The situation in northern Military Region 2 (Kontum, Pleiku, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen, and Phu Bon) was similar to that in Military Region 1, with combat and refugee care absorbing most of the government's attention and resources. The southern nine provinces were subjected only to harassment by the VC. Generally, however, development was at a standstill as the enemy attacks elsewhere caused local officials to become cautious. With considerable prodding by US advisors, June saw the Territorial Forces returned to the field and development projects resumed. Pacification in Military Region 3 was disrupted mostly along the Cambodian border with the loss of much of Binh Long Province and in some isolated locales, such as Phuoc Tuy Province. Generally, development was not impeded. In the Delta, while there were no large scale attacks as elsewhere in the country, terrorism and VC operations increased. After nearly 200 Territorial Force operating bases were overrun or abandoned, a plan was made to reconsolidate them and eliminate those which were unnecessary. In the absence of heavy fighting, agricultural activity continued to prosper, with land reform, public works, and village self-development moving ahead. Polls taken nationwide revealed a continued and growing confidence in the national government, the regular forces, the Territorial Forces, and their ability to defeat the enemy.

(U) The effects of the invasion served to depress the South Vietnamese economy. Manufacturing declined as people tended to postpone investments and major purchases. In addition, rubber tapping and logging were halted in the areas of heavy fighting. An additional complicating factor was the increased budget deficit resulting from costs for refugee and veteran benefits, basic reconstruction, and military related activities. However, the government took strong, effective measures to control the economy and to enact essential legislation. Retail sales were only slightly off, and exports remained high. The mildly depressed economy was expected to recover as the military situation stabilized.

(U) The enemy offensive had a major impact on the logistics Vietnamization activities, as tactical exigencies caused a shift in emphasis from training and planning to maximum support of the combat units. The performance of logistical elements attested to the progress. A prime example was the RVNAF Department of Defense Transportation, which rapidly adapted to the large movement requirements generated to counter the offensive. Truck and watercraft units were deployed as the continually changing situation required their support of combat operations. A heavy burden fell to

the ARVN truck units which had assumed total responsibility for trucking activities early in 1972, when the last US truck units completed redeployment. The cargo tonnage and passengers carried to support the RVNAF activities surpassed all expectations.

(U) The largest US incremental drawdown was entering its final month when the enemy offensive began and continued unabated. The resulting turn-in, redistribution, and retrograde of excess materiel were major logistical activities, complicated by the closing of Da Nang port and the retrograde of its stocks during the same period. By the end of June the US combat units retrograde essentially had been completed; there no longer was a requirement to continue the intensive materiel retrograde management program which had been in operation for several years. Over six billion dollars worth of cargo had been retrograded.

(U) In spite of the offensive, many phases of the logistics Vietnamization effort continued. On 1 April ARVN assumed the responsibility for ammunition support of all US and Free World forces under the Single Ammunition Logistics System (SALS). In late May an ARVN committee was formed under the Commander, National Materiel Management Agency (NMMA), to plan the four ARVN base depots' consolidation to form the 1st ARVN Associated Depot at Long Binh. The associated base depots eventually would provide centralized control of all technical service supplies. Service peculiar items for the VNAF and VNN would continue to be provided by the Air Logistics Center and the Vietnamese Naval Supply Center. Similarly, critical decisions were made to activate the new RVNAF Automated Materiel Management System (RAMMS) computer system to improve supply management.

(U) Facilities transfers continued as US units withdrew. In May the ARVN assumed responsibility for ammunition and shallow boat discharge at Cam Ranh port. The majority of the remaining US medical facilities were transferred, along with the medical materiel necessary to assure the immediate use of the facility for patient care. In conjunction with the medical facilities transfer, the retrograde of medical supplies and equipment was carefully controlled to assure all in-country requirements were met and the property redistributed properly.

(U) The communications-electronics facilities transfer progressed with publication of the transition schedule in April and the continued training of RVNAF personnel. The Vietnamese performance exceeded expectations, as the services provided high quality and reliable communications support to both US and RVNAF forces.

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Despite the enemy offensive the US troop withdrawal continued. On 9 April, C Battery, 2/94th Artillery fired the last American heavy artillery round in Vietnam.

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(C) During May Project ENHANCE was initiated to replace equipment losses suffered during the offensive, fill shortfalls in the improvement and modernization program, and increase the capability of the RVNAF. This was a major logistics effort affecting all of the Vietnamese services and resulting in RVNAF force structure changes, especially within the ARVN and VNAF.

(S) The NGUYEN HUE Offensive brought about acceleration of the consolidated RVNAF Improvement Modernization Program (GRIMP) in terms of Project ENHANCE units. In order to accommodate the necessary changes, a temporary increase of 16,905 spaces was approved pending resolution of required manpower trade-offs within and between the services. In June it was proposed that the space increase be resolved by reducing the Popular Forces by a like number. Other changes, ultimately approved by JCS, included the following:

--ARVN recommended the addition of three 175mm artillery battalions, two M-48 tank battalions, two ADA battalions and 680 TOW personnel.

--VNAF proposed deletion of the short take-off and landing (STOL) program to accommodate an additional seven aircraft squadrons plus assorted additional aircraft, base security support, improved undergraduate training, activation of a pilot survival school, and activation of the 8th Air Division.

--VNN proposed inactivation of one river assault group, two river interdiction divisions and a reduction of 278 Viper craft spaces to provide a total of 708 manpower spaces to accommodate the increase of three high endurance cutters (WHEC), activation of a third flotilla headquarters, and increased security for 15 existing radar sites. No major changes in VNMC force structure occurred during this period.

(S) A Long Range RVNAF Force Structure Plan, proposed by MACV, forwarded to JCS in April 1972, and amended in June 1972, recommended the adoption of an RVNAF post-hostilities structure

consisting of three infantry divisions, an airborne division, and a marine division.

(U) RVNAF accessions after the offensive began were more than adequate to meet the losses sustained and to build up to authorized strengths. Although required manpower resources were available in number there were some problems associated with officer grade imbalance and NCO shortages during this period. These problems were being studied by JCS with the view of restoring the imbalances as rapidly as possible.

(U) Because of the NVA offensive, added requirements in command, control, and support of the air war competed for the resources that could be given to all efforts, including the advisory effort. In spite of these demands, the advisory program, while reduced in size, continued to function in the same areas as before the NVA offensive.

(U) In the ground combat units, regimental advisory teams which were withdrawn earlier in the year were restored as a result of the NVA offensive. The marine and airborne divisions retained advisors down to the battalion level.

(U) In May, as consolidations of MACV staff elements and organizations became necessary due to US force reductions, the MACV Training Directorate was reorganized into the Army Advisory Group (AAG). This new organization, which became the Army counterpart of the Air Force and Navy advisory organizations already in existence, was given the responsibility to provide the operational, organizational, and training advice for the four ARVN commands: armor, artillery, ranger, and airborne. AAG also was responsible for coordinating ARVN joint and combined service training matters.

(U) Advisors to the VNN were eliminated from several areas, including coastal radar stations, coastal flotillas and groups, PCE/PGM ship riders, and various units of the Riverine Command. There was no significant change in the AFGP's advisory operating procedures during this period.

AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(U) Plans to step up the air interdiction campaign were dramatically overtaken by the events of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. Operational exigencies forced a reassessment of priorities in response to the enemy assault. The enemy was assisted by bad weather during the first two weeks of the offensive, which prevented the VNAF and USAF from fully utilizing the air superiority capability which they then enjoyed. This was countered by increased flying in marginal weather, the use of all weather systems, increased USAF close air support activities, and the increased use of naval

gunfire in coastal areas, since it was not affected by the low visibility conditions as were aircraft operations.

(S) A most dramatic increase (840 percent) occurred in the US tactical air effort in South Vietnam during April. The vast majority (82 percent) of these sorties were in close support of RVNAF troops. This marked a significant change from the January to March situation where the close air support role was handled primarily by VNAF and the USAF TACAIR concentrated on interdiction in the Khmer Republic and Laos. It was, of course,

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dictated by the critical situation on the ground which generated requirements for close air support far beyond VNAF's capability to deliver. The USAF was able to dramatically increase the sortie level in South Vietnam by use of several methods: First, USAF TACAIR resources were augmented by 72 F-4s and 14 F-105s from worldwide resources. Second, US Navy aircraft carriers on station in the Gulf of Tonkin were increased from two to four in early April adding about 130 additional aircraft to the air effort. Third, during April USMC air assets were brought back into Vietnam as augmentation forces. Fourth, an aircraft turnaround capability was established at Bien Hoa AB which enabled Thailand-based fighter bombers to conduct a strike in South Vietnam, land at Bien Hoa AB to rearm and refuel, and then fly another strike on the return trip to the Thai bases. Lastly, sorties were diverted from Laos and the Khmer Republic into higher priority areas in South Vietnam. A combination of these methods brought a tremendous increase in close air support sorties during April. This trend continued into May with an additional 14 percent increase for that month. In June the sortie rate decreased slightly as the ground situation stabilized, USAF assets reverted to the earlier priorities, and the VNAF again conducted the majority of the close air support strikes. The heavy saturation of South Vietnam's airspace by such large concentrations of aircraft and varied types of aircraft presented very real command and control problems.

(B) B-52 sorties in SEA increased 15 percent in May, 20 percent in June, and 20 percent in July. The increase in South Vietnam was proportionally much greater, however, as the percentage of Southeast Asia B-52 strikes within the Republic rose from 44 percent in March, to 90 percent in April, to 98 percent in May. As with TACAIR, a decline to 80 percent in June reflected the stabilized ground situation and the resulting change in priorities. Coupled with the initial shift in priorities was the use of B-52s as a close air support weapon; in some instances strikes were delivered within 1000 yards of RVNAF troops. While this was not unprecedented, it was done on a much larger scale than ever before and was especially effective against enemy forces at An Loc, Kontum, and Quang Tri.

(C) The enemy also stoutly resisted the allied control of the skies. In Military Region 1 alone it was estimated that as many as seven regiments of antiaircraft artillery were employed. To further his air defense, for the first time the enemy introduced the SA-7 Strela missile, a shoulder fired, infrared, homing missile. This presented an immediate and serious threat to all aircraft, but especially to helicopters and other slow flying aircraft, such

as gunships and transports, which habitually operated at low altitudes. The initial usage of this weapon resulted in roughly one aircraft downed per eight SA-7s fired. (The SA-2 fired per aircraft downed ratio during the same period was 64 to 1.) The missile caused significant adjustments in aircraft tactics and operating altitudes; however, the use of infrared suppression devices and decoy flares reduced this threat to more reasonable proportions. Nonetheless, it remained as an ever present threat from April on. SA-2 sites were also moved into both the Demilitarized Zone and northern South Vietnam itself with the resulting firing envelope including considerable portions of Military Region 1.

(U) US Army aviation during this three month period reflected an increased sortie rate while Army units continued to drawdown and redeploy to CONUS. In many instances helicopter and fixed wing aircraft crews gathered the only current information available on the rapidly changing enemy movements. During the early dark days of the offensive the Army aviation effort was crucial, as it provided intelligence, evacuation, airlift, medevac, resupply, and innumerable other vital functions. The feats of superb airmanship and courage among the air cavalry assets were numerous, and those on the ground habitually praised their efforts.

(U) An innovation of significance was the combination of a USAF forward air controller and a marine naval gunfire spotter from the Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) who operated effectively from Da Nang. This combination permitted great flexibility and economy of resources, since the most efficient use could be made of TACAIR, artillery, and naval gunfire by the same team.

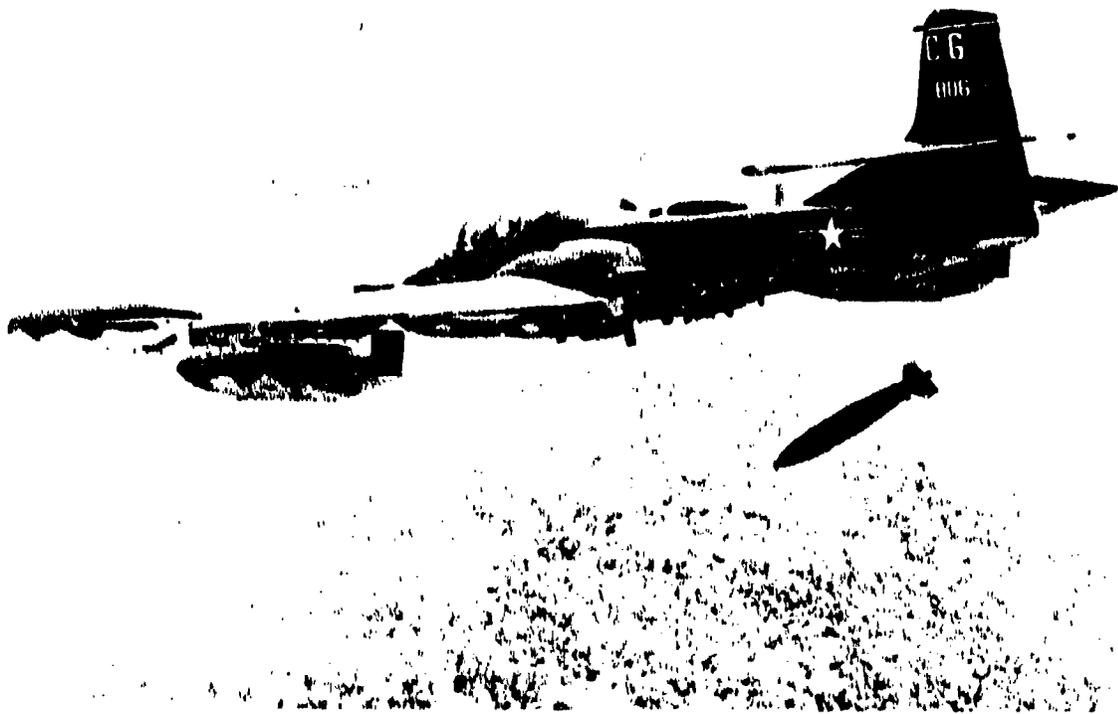
(U) As US air assets continued to multiply in April, more resources were made available to carry the war to the enemy. President Nixon's announcement on 9 May that the US had mined the North Vietnamese harbors, effectively closing its ports, and the subsequent inauguration of bombing in North Vietnam (Operation LINEBACKER) on 10 May marked turning points in the effort. However, it should be noted that close air support to the troops on the ground did not suffer as a result of this campaign. The allied troops were always able to count on air support being made rapidly available, weather permitting. In addition, the increased use of all weather delivery systems made close air support more readily available, regardless of the weather.

(U) An important development in the air force arsenal was the use of laser guided ordnance—the so called "smart" bombs, which were especially

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deadly to enemy armor. Part of the reason for the air resources' responsiveness to ground support needs was that the laser guided weapons increased

accuracy and less sorties per target were required. The sorties saved on one target were, of course, available for use on other targets.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 2-1

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COMBAT OPERATIONS, APRIL - JUNE 1972

(U) The North Vietnamese invasion occurred in late March when the enemy made the first of three major thrusts into South Vietnam. On 30 March the 304B and 308th NVA Divisions, supported by armor and heavy artillery, moved through the Demilitarized Zone into Quang Tri Province. Concurrently, the 324B NVA Division made an easterly push toward Hue, 90 kilometers below the Demilitarized Zone, in Thua Thien Province. On the following day, 250 kilometers to the south, in the Central Highlands of Military Region 2, the 320th NVA Division launched its attack in Kontum Province. By 4 April a third drive was underway in Binh Long Province, 100 kilometers north of Saigon and 800 kilometers below the Demilitarized Zone. Elements of the 5th and 9th VC Divisions, again supported by tanks, attacked from the Khmer Republic. This posed an immediate threat to Saigon down Route 18 and the Saigon River corridor. The magnitude of the initial invasion was such that six fully equipped divisions entered South Vietnam on three separate fronts in a coordinated attack. They used conventional tactics and introduced weaponry beyond that of a guerrilla campaign.

(U) Among the weapons introduced were 80 items of equipment not previously employed in South Vietnam. The enemy air defense capability was augmented with the SA-7 surface-to-air missile, which posed an increased threat to slow flying fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. Also introduced was a series of tanks not previously seen, including the T-59 and the T-54. He had improved his armor defeating and direct fire capability with the ST-3 Sagger wire guided missile. In addition, the 130mm field gun, believed to be the principal piece for at least two artillery regiments, made its first appearance.

(U) The South Vietnamese armed forces were confronted with a conventional attack by the North Vietnamese Army. This was an invasion in every sense of the word. At the outset, the 13 divisions of the Republic of Vietnam were deployed throughout the country. Major elements of the general reserve, the Marine and Airborne Divisions, were already deployed to Military Regions 1 and 2, where the initial enemy thrusts developed.

MILITARY REGION 1

(C) The enemy invasion forces pressed their offensive from the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) to realize their two main objectives in Quang Tri Province. These objectives were the evacuation of friendly fire support bases (FSB) and the occupation of the province capital, Quang Tri City (Fig. 2-1). The offensive intensified in the first week of

April from the initial level when the invasion began on 30 March. By 2 April the 27th and 31st NVA Independent Regiments had forced the evacuation of FSBs A-2, A-4, C-1, and C-2 in the north in the vicinity of the DMZ and of FSB Fuller in the western crescent (Fig. 2-2). Late on 2 April FSB Carroll was surrendered to the North Vietnamese after massive artillery and ground attacks. The loss of Carroll left Mai Loc Combat Base vulnerable; the garrison was ordered to withdraw to positions east of Cam Lo. Continued enemy advances forced the evacuation of Cam Lo and FSB Anne by 4 April.

(C) In the face of this overwhelming enemy assault, I Corps made plans to establish defensive positions along the Cua Viet River. Marine and ranger elements from the general reserve began moving north to be employed in the 3d ARVN Division area. A general lull in activity from 4-9 April enabled the South Vietnamese to improve the defenses of Dong Ha and Quang Tri. On the 8th of April FSB Pedro was heavily engaged by indirect fire and ground attacks by the 203d Tank Regiment and the 8th Regiment, 304B Division. The fighting was costly for the enemy. In two days of battle in the Pedro area, enemy losses were reported at 1,067 killed. Friendly losses were reported as light. However, for the most part, the enemy had accomplished his first phase objectives of forcing the evacuation of South Vietnamese-held fire support bases.

(C) By the middle of April the Vietnamese ground troops had begun limited counter-offensive operations in Quang Tri Province, with the objective of retaking lost fire bases and clearing the area of North Vietnamese forces. Little progress was made in the ten days that followed. On 27 April the enemy responded by opening the second phase of his attack plan. Dong Ha City came under heavy attack by 130mm guns and 122mm rockets. This was followed by a major attack from the southwest by elements of the 308th NVA Division. On the same day, the battle began to rage again around Quang Tri City. The province capital was taken under attack by enemy armor and infantry from the northwest (308th Division), west (304B Division), and southwest (304B Division) following accurate and intensive heavy artillery fire against Quang Tri combat base, La Vang, and the highway (Route 1) bridge at the city. Friendly forces were forced back to within three to five kilometers of the city. Renewed attacks at Dong Ha on 28 April and the increasing danger to Quang Tri City led the South Vietnamese to decide to withdraw from Dong Ha and reorganize and reinforce the defenses

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Soldiers assist refugees across the Lai Giang River in Bong Son District as they flee the advancing North Vietnamese.

bush patrols and sweep operations that inflicted heavy casualties on enemy forces. Increased enemy pressure from troops of the 29th Regiment, 324B NVA Division and 5th and 6th NVA Independent Regiments, Military Region Tri-Thien Hue (MRTTH) on all allied positions in the western crescent and increasing numbers of small unit contacts in the coastal lowlands led to a strengthening of the defenses of American installations at Phu Bai and Tan My by soldiers of the US 196th Light Infantry Brigade.

(C) By 11 April Route 547 between FSBs Bastogne and Birmingham was under enemy control. Intensive antiaircraft fire hampered efforts to resupply by helicopter. A B-52 strike between Bastogne and Birmingham killed over 200 of the enemy, it failed to have any tangible effects on opening supply lines or reducing the enemy pressure. By the 13th FSBs King and Checkmate were under heavy

pressure; the defenders inflicted heavy casualties with each contact. Resupply of Bastogne and King was accomplished by foot when 1st ARVN Division forces continued to be unable to clear Route 547. However, the situation remained critical and Bastogne was evacuated on 14 April. Heavy fighting continued until 25 April when enemy pressure lessened in the Bastogne, Birmingham, and King areas. Bastogne was reoccupied by ARVN forces on 20 April. Area intelligence sources estimated that the enemy was regrouping to prepare for an all-out offensive. Route 547 remained in enemy hands and the supply situation in the outlying bases was serious. The expected attack on Bastogne began on 28 April with heavy attacks-by-fire and ground attacks. During the night the South Vietnamese defenders were forced to again abandon the position. The evacuation of Bastogne placed Checkmate in an untenable position, and it too was evacuated. The

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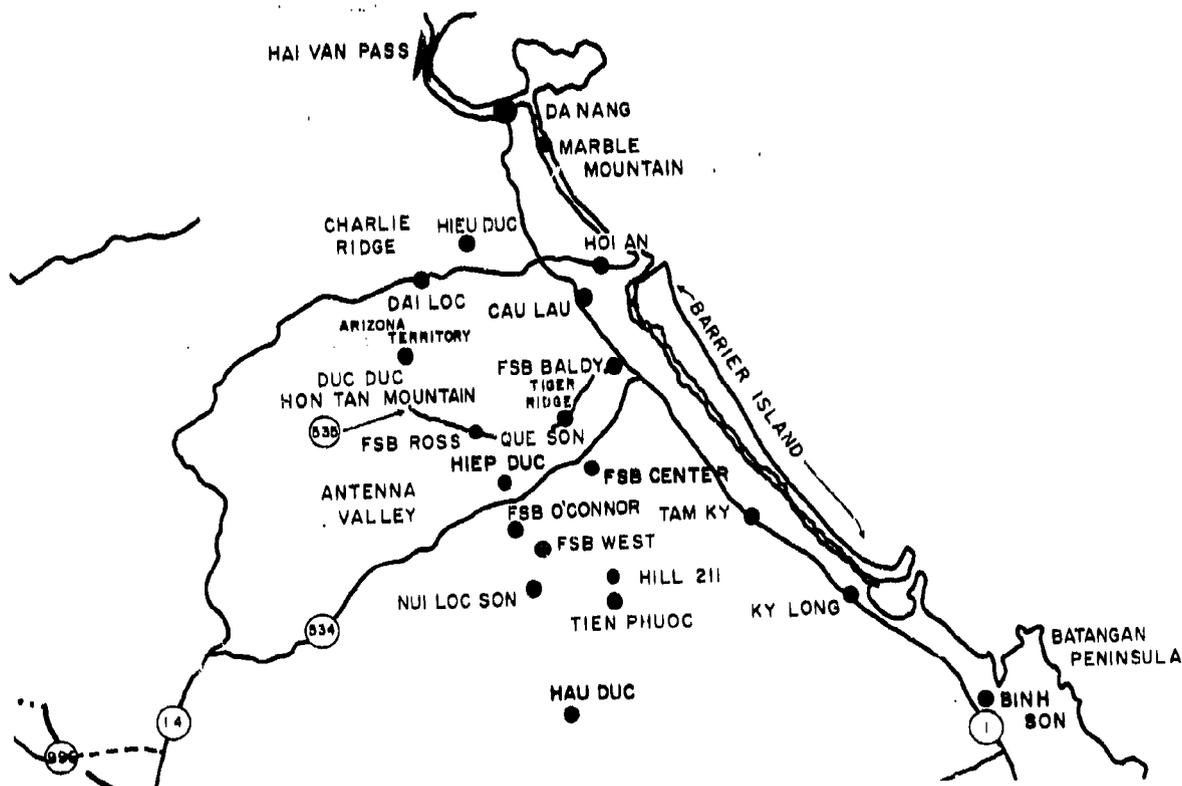
loss of these fire bases jeopardized the defense of Hue. As the month ended, attacks-by-fire and ground probes against Birmingham and King continued.

(C) Combat activity in southern Military Region 1 was initially light compared to the two provinces in the north. Enemy small unit attacks and light mortar attacks-by-fire were countered by Territorial Forces, ranger border defense battalions, and the 2d ARVN Division through the use of increased patrolling and mobile operations. The most significant activity in April centered in the FSB West and O'Connor area southwest of Da Nang (Fig. 2-3). After a two-day battle on 9 and 10 April, South Vietnamese forces were forced to evacuate the fire bases. The loss of these two strongpoints placed the district capital of Hieu Duc in a tenuous position as enemy pressure increased. B-52 and tactical air strikes were coordinated with government ground forces in an effort to retake the fire bases and relieve the pressure against Hieu Duc. The battle for FSB West continued through the rest of April. South Vietnamese forces met increasing resistance with each attack. On 28 April a heavy attack-by-fire, followed by ground attacks, were launched against

the district capital. The district headquarters was overrun after a day long battle.

(C) Sporadic rocket attacks by the 576th and 577th NVA Artillery Battalions against American installations at Da Nang and Marble Mountain were reported during the month. On 12 April Da Nang Air Base received a 122mm rocket attack that killed 14 Vietnamese civilians and wounded 25. American losses were 11 wounded, one aircraft and three trucks destroyed, and three aircraft damaged. Rocket attacks continued almost daily at Da Nang, resulting in 58 Vietnamese civilians killed and 61 wounded; 18 Americans were wounded and 16 aircraft were damaged. A rocket defense plan was implemented on 22 April that greatly reduced the rocket attacks against these two installations.

(C) On 3 May LTG Ngo Quang Truong replaced LTG Hoang Xuan Lam as Commanding General, I Corps and Military Region 1. Immediately, action was taken to organize the battered stragglers from the Quang Tri fighting and to improve the posture of I Corps units. A joint forward command post was established at the Hue Citadel by LTG Truong and MG Frederick J. Kroesen, Jr., Commander of the



Source: MACMHB

Figure: 2-3

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American First Regional Assistance Command (FRAC). Straggler control points were established at Hue and Da Nang to assist in the reorganization of units that had been rendered combat ineffective in the Quang Tri Province battles. The 3d ARVN Division immediately began to rebuild its forces near Phu Bai under a new commander, BG Nguyen Duy Hinh.

(C) Although the city of Hue was not under attack, enemy ground probes and attacks-by-fire continued along the northern defense line. Forces were shifted within the military region to implement the Hue defense plan. Territorial Forces were placed under the control of regular force commanders and integrated into the defensive structure.

(C) By 5 May the 1st ARVN Division had begun limited offensive operations in an area of operations southwest of Hue, where FSB King had been under increasing enemy pressure since 1 May. The division operation was designed to relieve the pressure against King and Birmingham, and to retake those bases to the west and southwest that had been lost to enemy action. The South Vietnamese forces were immediately engaged. American and Vietnamese tactical air support, together with numerous B-52 strikes, enabled the division elements to make steady progress and inflict heavy casualties on the enemy.

(C) Ground combat activity had been light in the marine area of operations since the fall of FSB Nancy, although rocket and artillery attacks had continued. On 8 May an intense firepower campaign consisting of B-52s, tactical aircraft, naval gunfire, and artillery fires was directed against enemy forces in southeastern Quang Tri Province. This program significantly reduced mortar attacks, but attacks by 130mm artillery continued. On 9 May the 2d Brigade of the Vietnamese Airborne Division arrived from Military Region 3 and was placed under the operational control of the Marine Division. These reinforcements permitted the marines to start their first offensive operation on 13 May, when the 369th Marine Brigade conducted a limited objective operation 12 kilometers into southeastern Quang Tri Province. Two battalions air assaulted in US Marine Corps helicopters, while a third battalion conducted a river crossing operation across the Tach Ma River. Although the plan called for this battalion to link-up with the heliborne force to the north, immediate heavy contact with the enemy prevented it. The two battalions in the north were inserted without difficulty, effected their link-up, and swept to the south. They reached the defensive line at the province border by nightfall. The results of the operation, supported by American tactical aircraft and naval gunfire, were 248 enemy killed, six enemy soldiers and 109 weapons captured, and three PT-76 tanks

and two 130mm guns destroyed. Marine casualties were 9 killed and 38 wounded.

(C) Meanwhile, 1st ARVN Division patrolling operations continued to engage enemy forces along Route 547 and the outlying fire bases. On 14 May two regiments of the division began an operation to clear the high ground south of Birmingham and Bastogne. In the first two days of the operation 172 enemy were killed (probably from the 5th and 6th NVA Regiments) and 20 tons of ammunition and five tons of rice were captured. On 15 May a platoon of ARVN volunteers was air assaulted into Bastogne. Ground linkup was made the following day against light enemy resistance. In the following two days, heavy fighting at the two fire bases cost the enemy 246 dead while South Vietnamese casualties were light. The division continued to find large caches of ammunition and supplies. An air strike south of FSB Checkmate caused secondary explosions lasting over an hour. On 17 May elements of the division air assaulted into landing zones in the vicinity of FSB Helen, using both Vietnamese and American helicopters. Elements of this force moved overland to FSB Rakkasan, encountering only light resistance.

(C) Following the 13 May marine offensive in the north, activity in the Marine Division area of operation had been at a low level. On 21 May this lull ended when the enemy initiated a three-pronged attack. The 27th and 31st Regiments, B-5 Front and the 18th Regiment, 325th NVA Division, with armor support from the 202d Tank Regiment and artillery support from the 84th Artillery Regiment, moved south along the coast toward FSB Nancy. The 304th NVA Division, with artillery, tanks, and enemy units of the B-5 front, attempted to drive south down the coastline east of Route 1 and one kilometer west of FSB Nancy. The ground attacks, made by enemy tank-infantry teams, succeeded in penetrating three to five kilometers into the South Vietnamese defensive positions. Unexplicably these attacks were not preceded by an artillery and mortar preparation as was the normal practice of the North Vietnamese. However, the marines counterattacked and resorted to the original defensive line by nightfall. In the process, an enemy force was trapped behind the lines to the east along the coast.

(C) At dawn on the following day, the North Vietnamese renewed their attacks, apparently in an effort to rescue the encircled force. Heavy fighting continued through the morning with elements of the 304B Division penetrating three to four kilometers into Thua Thien Province. The situation stabilized in mid-afternoon. Marine counterattacks once more restored the line by 1900 hours, with the enemy pocket still trapped. The results of this day's fighting were 302 enemy soldiers dead, 18 tanks destroyed, and two SA-7 missiles captured.

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(C) This increase in activity influenced South Vietnamese commanders to commit the 3d Airborne Brigade, which had arrived in Military Region 1 on 22 May. The airborne Division with two brigades was assigned an area of operation northwest of Hue. The Marine Division assumed control of the 1st Ranger Group, which had just completed reorganizing and refitting at Da Nang. On 23 May two ranger battalions combat assaulted into the northeastern corner of the marine area of operations to assist in restoring the Tach Ma defense line.

(C) On 24 May the Marine Division conducted airmobile and amphibious assault operations into Quang Tri Province. One battalion of marines, embarked in US Navy LTSs at Tan My, went ashore in US Marine Corps landing vehicles across Wunder Beach. Two hours later another marine battalion was airlifted by USMC helicopters into a landing zone east of Quang Tri. Although both forces were unopposed in their initial landings, contact with the enemy was soon made. These two battalions joined forces and swept toward the south. A third marine battalion was airlifted by Vietnamese Air Force helicopters from Tan My into a landing zone along the northeast end of the Thua Thien provincial border. This battalion crossed the Tach Ma River and made contact with the enemy immediately. The operation, SONG THUAN 6-72, was supported by tactical aircraft, artillery, and naval gunfire. The two battalions in the north completed their sweep to the south and were joined by the third battalion in the early morning of 25 May. In this operation 515 enemy were killed and large caches of food and ammunition were destroyed. Five thousand Vietnamese civilians were freed from enemy control. Twelve South Vietnamese Marines and four Americans were killed, and 36 marines were wounded. During the period of the operation, the Marine Division reported heavy fighting all along the northern front. The heaviest contact was northeast of FSB Nancy. In this region, 322 enemy soldiers were killed and six tanks were destroyed. The marines lost 17 dead and 74 wounded.

(C) On 26 May the ranger elements that had been airlifted into the marine area were in heavy contact behind the My Chanh defense line. The ranger attack was repulsed and an enemy counter-attack drove the rangers into secondary positions to the south. When these positions failed to hold, the rangers exfiltrated toward Huong Dinh. Ranger losses were 87 killed, 218 wounded, and 105 missing. Enemy losses were unknown.

(C) Contact was reported all along the northern front on 27 May, but the marine defenses held. Activity was light in other parts of Thua Thien Province. The Airborne Division reported light con-

tacts while conducting patrolling operations. In the 1st ARVN Division area, activity was light after the mid-month battles to retake FSB Bastogne. On 26 May the 3d Regiment recaptured Checkmate against moderate enemy resistance. South Vietnamese troops occupying Checkmate continued to receive 130mm fire through the rest of the month, suffering light casualties. As May ended, the division elements continued to have brief, but intense, engagements with the invading forces.

(C) Activity in Quang Nam Province was at a moderate level during May and focused in the Que Son-FSB Ross area. Sporadic attacks-by-fire, sapper attacks, and ground contacts were reported in the coastal regions. In the Da Nang area on 1 May, two bridges on Route 1 were attacked by the T89 Sapper Battalion. The bridges were heavily damaged, but ARVN engineers repaired them and the highway was opened by nightfall.

(C) On 10 May a Regional Force outpost was overrun and a bridge was blown in the Hai Van Pass by the 582d NVA Battalion. The bridge was quickly repaired and the outpost reoccupied. Also in the pass area, the Nam-O Bridge was heavily damaged by the 582d NVA Battalion on 24 May. The bridge was repaired and Route 1 opened two days later.

(C) American installations at Da Nang and Marble Mountain received light rocket attacks on 6 and 7 May, causing minor damage. On 13 May enemy rocket and mortar teams of the 575th and 577th NVA Artillery Battalions attacked Da Nang Air Base; 18 122mm rockets hit inside the perimeter, causing damage to the runway and one F-4 aircraft, and destroying a warehouse. The runway was repaired in two hours. One rocket hit the Duy Tan Hospital killing five patients and wounding 16 others. Three Americans were lightly wounded at Marble Mountain in a mixed mortar and rocket attack of 25 to 30 rounds; three helicopters were moderately damaged. On the following day, 25 rockets were found and destroyed by a search operation in the rocket belt. Only one light attack was reported for the remainder of the month. On 20 May an American ship in Da Nang harbor was moderately damaged by an enemy explosive device.

(C) Elsewhere in the province, enemy pressure against FSB Ross continued in the form of attacks-by-fire and ground attacks against Regional Force outposts. Territorial Forces and 2d Division elements countered with mobile patrolling operations supported by B-52s and American and Vietnamese tactical air. A B-52 strike on 13 May in the Ross area killed 54 enemy and reduced enemy pressure for 10 days. A high level of activity was reported during the last week of the month. The town of Que Son received a heavy attack-by-fire on 22 May

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followed by a ground attack from elements of the 711th Division, Regional Forces, supported by helicopter and fixed wing gunships, repulsed the attack. On 27 May two Regional Force outposts were overrun early in the morning but were retaken in the afternoon. On 30 May ranger border defense elements killed 42 of the enemy in a brief, but intense, engagement.

(S) In northern Thua Thien on 8 June, the Marine Division began a two-day limited objective operation by attacking north with five battalions, driving three to five kilometers into Quang Tri Province. The operation accounted for 131 enemy killed, 65 weapons captured (including one SA-7 missile) and three tanks destroyed. The marines reported two killed and six wounded. Ground activity fell to a low level following this offensive action, but enemy attacks-by-fire increased in number and intensity. Seven to nine attacks of 60 to 100 rounds each were reported.

(C) On 18 June the marines again attacked to the north against objectives five to eight kilometers inside Quang Tri Province. During the first day the marines reported 80 enemy killed and 15 rockets and four SA-7 missiles captured. The enemy countered with heavy artillery and mortar attacks, with approximately 500 incoming rounds reported on 18 June. The operation terminated late in the day on 18 June.

(C) On 20 June heavy fighting erupted in the marine area. The North Vietnamese attacked with tanks and infantry along the My Chanh defense line, supported by intensive 130mm gun fire. The marines were supported by American tactical aircraft, B-52 strikes, and naval gunfire, as well as by Vietnamese artillery and aircraft. For five days heavy contacts were reported, but the marines held and inflicted heavy losses on the attackers. When the assault died away after 24 June, 601 enemy soldiers had been killed, and 23 tanks and three 130mm guns were destroyed. The Marines lost 71 killed and 179 wounded.

(C) Activity in the Airborne Division area centered southwest of FSB Nancy during the first part of June, in response to continued enemy pressure from the 308th and 304B Divisions in that area. In addition to protecting this line of approach to Hue, Airborne elements expanded their area of control to the west and southwest against light and moderate enemy resistance. Light ARVN casualties were caused by the almost daily 130mm gun and mortar fires. Occasionally equipment damage was suffered. The most significant ground attack occurred on 6 June eight kilometers southwest of Nancy. The 8th Airborne Battalion, supported by tactical air and artillery, killed 80 enemy soldiers in a two hour engagement; airborne losses were three killed

and 12 wounded. After this battle, ground contacts were brief, as the enemy avoided decisive engagements.

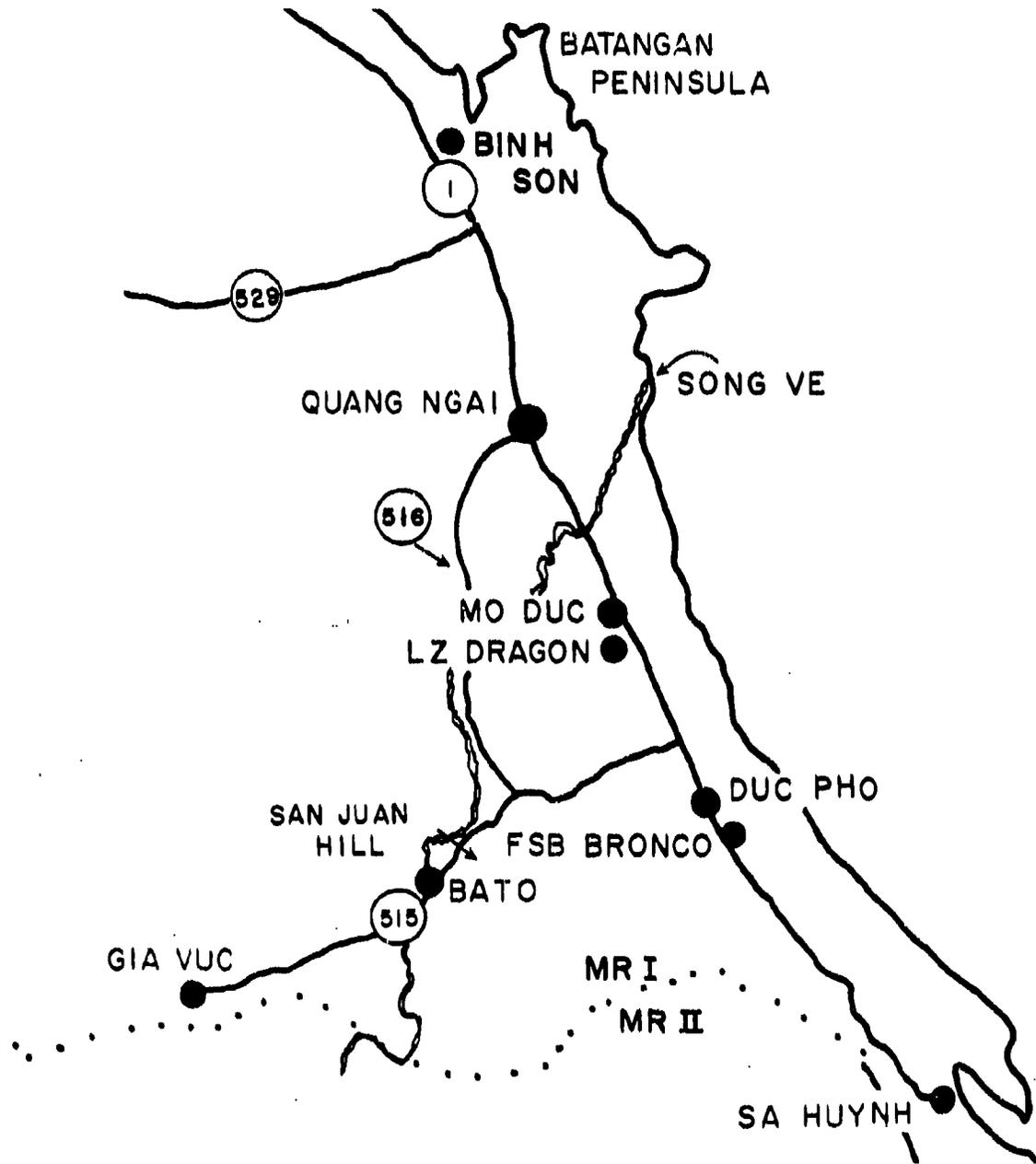
(C) On 21 June the airborne troopers became involved in the enemy attack that struck the Marines the day before. The enemy tanks and infantry assaulted across the My Chanh defense line one kilometer southwest of Nancy. Contact lasted throughout the day. The defending forces blocked the penetration two kilometers southeast of the defense line, while American and Vietnamese tactical air and artillery pounded the area. By the end of the day the enemy had lost 51 killed, and 17 tanks and three 130mm guns destroyed. Enemy pressure continued the following day, but the situation remained stable. The VNAF reported destroying five enemy 105mm howitzers and ARVN ground forces accounted for 55 enemy dead. The enemy attempt to renew the attack the next day was spoiled. Sporadic heavy contacts continued on 24 June, but attacks-by-fire were significantly reduced. By nightfall airborne forces had driven the enemy across the river and had restored the My Chanh defense line. Enemy losses for the three day period were 259 killed, and 34 tanks, 12 artillery pieces, and one anti-aircraft gun destroyed. Friendly casualties were 29 killed, 123 wounded, and 16 missing. The South Vietnamese also reported that three of their tanks had been destroyed and one 105mm howitzer and four helicopters were damaged.

(C) Heavy enemy artillery attacks continued throughout the Airborne Division area of operations on 26 June, but ground attacks were light. The enemy indirect fire inflicted moderate damage to fire support bases. The most severe damage was at FSB Jack where 11 howitzers were destroyed or heavily damaged. Two Vietnamese Air Force helicopters and an American Cobra gunship were downed by enemy ground fire; 16 South Vietnamese were killed in the crashes.

(C) In the Hue area at the beginning of June, the 1st ARVN Division retained the responsibility for the defense of the west and southwest approaches to Hue. The division also had the mission of conducting limited offensive operations to expand the area of friendly control to the southwest, adding depth to the Hue defense. Activity during the first part of the month was light to moderate and focused along the fire support base line of Birmingham, Checkmats, and Bastogne. Fire Support Base King to the north was also critical to the mutual support of the other bases. Ground contacts were brief, but intense, and resulted in 277 enemy killed during the first nine days of the month. ARVN casualties for the same period were 16 killed and 75 wounded.

(C) A heavy contact developed south of FSB Checkmats on 10 June as 1st Regiment elements

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exploited a B-52 strike. Results of the contact were 136 enemy killed and friendly losses of four killed, 52 wounded, and five missing. Just northwest of Bastogne another 68 enemy were killed, while six ARVN were wounded. B-52 strikes were employed again on 11 June southeast of Checkmate, followed by ground elements exploitation. The results were 115 enemy killed.

(C) Activity increased the following week with an increase in enemy mortar and artillery attacks and ground contacts. The pattern of activity of sharp, brief ground engagements continued. Results for the period were: 485 enemy killed, 228 by air strikes; 26 friendly soldiers killed (one American) and 127 wounded (three American). ARVN also lost over 3,000 rounds of artillery ammunition in an enemy attack-by-fire.

(C) Ground activity decreased to a low level the following week as the American installation at Phu Bai received light 122mm rocket attacks causing minor damage. 1st Division elements reported 336 enemy killed (133 by air strikes) for the week, while suffering 23 killed and 80 wounded for the same period.

(C) On 26 June a significant increase in the number and intensity of enemy attacks-by-fire was reported. Particularly hard hit was FSB Checkmate, which also received two ground attacks from elements of the 324B Division and the 5th and 6th Regiments, MRTTH. Several attacks-by-fire of over 100 rounds of mortar and artillery were reported; however, ARVN casualties were light. The enemy increased pressure on 27 June. Virtually all bases were hit, with Checkmate reporting 180 rounds of 122mm artillery and Bastogne reporting 142 rounds during the night. Heavy ground contacts, following 450 rounds of mortar and artillery fire in a two-and-a-half hour period, caused the withdrawal of the ARVN company-size security force from Checkmate on the night of 29 June. Heavy enemy pressure continued as the month ended. Casualties reported for the last week of the month were 267 enemy killed (58 by air strikes) and 45 ARVN killed and 184 wounded.

(C) Activity in Quang Tin and Quang Ngai, the two southernmost provinces of Military Region 1, was initially very light. Throughout the early days of the enemy offensive combat activity was light-to-moderate in comparison to the level of fighting to the north. Enemy operations were designed to disrupt pacification, to interdict lines of communication, and to expand control over the land areas and population centers. South Vietnamese operations were conversely designed to prevent the enemy

from succeeding and to destroy enemy forces whenever and where ever they appeared.

(C) No significant activity in these two provinces by either friendly or enemy forces was reported during April, the first month of the enemy offensive. For most of May, activity remained light in Quang Tin Province. On 30 May the enemy, probably the 70th and 72d NVA Infantry Battalions, attacked Binh Duong village, east of Route 1 just south of the Quang Nam border. Several Regional Force outposts were overrun, but these were restored to government control by the end of the month.

(C) In Quang Ngai Province activity centered along Route 515 from the highlands to the coast (Fig. 2-4). Ranger camps at Ba To and Gia Vuc were subjected to enemy pressure beginning on 13 May, reaching a peak by 24 May. An attack on 18 May at both camps cost the enemy 79 killed and 80 weapons captured, while ranger losses were light. The enemy renewed his attack on the next day, overrunning two outposts at Gia Vuc and interdicting Route 515 between the two camps. With the support of South Vietnamese artillery from FSB Bronco and the assistance of Vietnamese tactical air strikes, the rangers retook the outposts and the high ground around the camps on 22 May. Enemy casualties were 272 killed; the rangers reported six killed and 14 wounded. Activity had returned to a low level as the month ended.

(C) In June the activity in the two southern provinces was light and sporadic. Infrequent terrorist incidents and sapper attacks were reported. A bridge on Route 1 was blown on 8 June and remained closed for two days. Quang Tin Province reported three Regional Force contacts on 11 June that resulted in 69 enemy killed, 24 of whom were killed by tactical air strikes. One other contact on 18 June resulted in 25 enemy killed with light Regional Force casualties. Other contacts in the province were of minor significance.

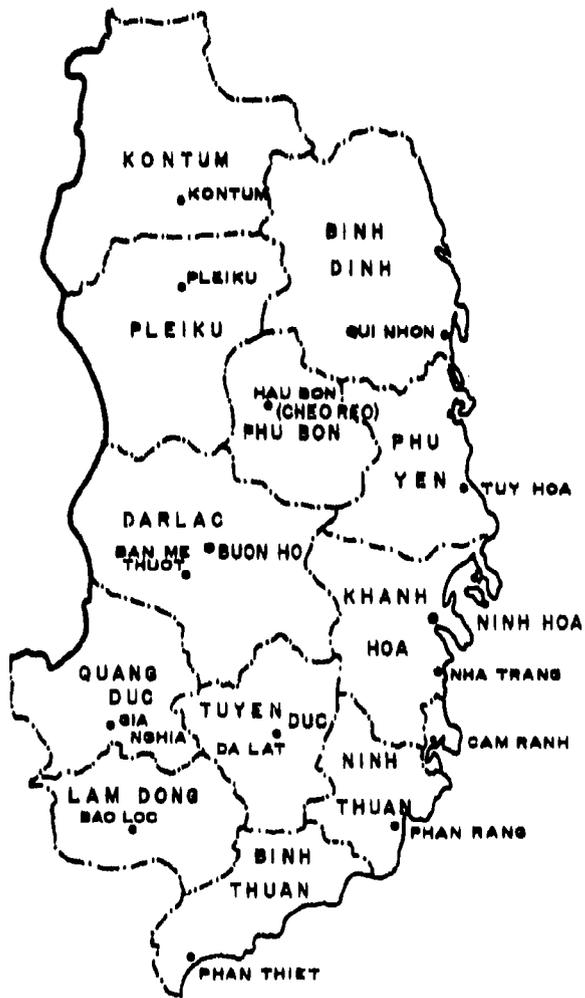
(C) On 14 June, a Regional Force element in northeastern Quang Ngai Province repulsed an enemy attack. The next day 37 enemy bodies were found outside the perimeter wire. Two days later, an element of a ranger border defense battalion at Gia Vuc killed 24 enemy with light casualties to themselves. On 18 June, 30 enemy were killed four kilometers to the northwest of Quang Ngai City by ranger forces. A follow up of the contact yielded 30 additional enemy dead the following day. Ranger losses were four killed and 16 wounded. In the same general area, twenty bodies were found, presumably killed by tactical air strikes. Other contacts in the province were insignificant in June.

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MILITARY REGION 2



Source: MACDI

Figure: 2-5

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MILITARY REGION 2

(C) During the period of the enemy offensive throughout South Vietnam, the significant fighting in Military Region 2 was confined to Kontum, Pleiku, and Binh Dinh Provinces (Fig. 2-5). During April, the first month of the offensive, combat activity was restricted to Kontum and Binh Dinh Provinces and was almost entirely initiated by the enemy. Activity elsewhere primarily involved Regional and Popular Force units, and consisted of scattered defensive actions. This was the pattern until late in 1972.

(C) The offensive was felt in Kontum Province in the middle of April when friendly positions along Rocket Ridge, occupied by elements of the 2d and 3d Airborne Brigades, began to receive enemy pressure (Fig. 2-6). On 14 April FSB Charlie, manned by the 11th Airborne Battalion, was overrun. The enemy pressure continued and on 21 April FSB Delta fell to the enemy. On 22 April the 3d Airborne Brigade, with the 1st, 2d, and 3d Airborne

Battalions, was redeployed from the Kontum area to Military Region 3. Route 14, between Kontum and Pleiku, was blocked by the 95B NVA Regiment at Kontum Pass. The pass was not reopened during April. The enemy's main effort commenced on the night of 23-24 April when his armor attacks forced the evacuation of Dak To and Tan Canh. Fragmented government elements exfiltrated to friendly control at Kontum. The personnel of the 42d and 47th Regiments from Tan Canh and Dak To were then moved to Camp Enari (Pleiku Province) for reorganization and refitting. The Commander, 23d ARVN Division, with his tactical command post at Kontum, began preparing for defense of the city. The fall of the Dak To-Tan Canh area isolated the 71st and 85th Ranger Border Defense Battalions at Ben Het, the 90th Ranger Border Defense Battalion at Dak Seang, and the 88th Ranger Border Defense Battalion at Dak Pek. These units successfully defended their bases during the remainder of the month.



Refugees move down a road toward Kontum after the fall of Dak To.

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(C) Significant activity in Binh Dinh Province began on 11 April when traffic on Route 19 was blocked by an enemy force entrenched at the An Khe Pass. The highway remained closed until 28 April when elements of the Republic of Korea Cavalry Regiment dislodged the enemy from the high ground overlooking the pass. In mid-April attacks-by-fire and increasing pressure against South Vietnamese forces in Northeastern Binh Dinh Province began. As the pressure increased, government forces evacuated Hoai An and Hoai Nhon district capitals. On 26 April Bong Son Pass fell to the enemy, closing Route 1 and isolating the northeastern corner of the province. On the last day of the month the only South Vietnamese forces north of the Bong Son Pass were at Landing Zone English and Tam Quan district capital.

(C) Activity during the first part of May in Kontum Province was enemy initiated and consisted of scattered ground contacts and attacks-by-fire. The enemy increased pressure against the ranger border defense battalion base camps at Ben Het, Poley Kleng, and Dak Pek. Friendly activity was directed toward preparing for the defense of Kontum City. A major shift of ARVN forces took place as the 6th Ranger Group replaced the airborne brigade (moved to Military Region 3) and the organic regiments of the 23d Division moved into Kontum City.

(C) On 9 May, after heavy attacks-by-fire, the enemy assaulted the ranger camps of Poley Kleng and Ben Het. The battalion at Poley Kleng was unable to hold and the camp was evacuated. Although the Ben Het defensive perimeter was breached during an enemy tank-infantry attack, the defenders held. By the night of 10 May the situation had stabilized, and by the following day Ben Het had been cleared of all enemy forces.

(U) On 10 May MG Nguyen Van Toan replaced LTG Ngo Dzu as Commanding General, II Corps and Military Region 2

(C) On 14 May following heavy attacks-by-fire against ARVN positions, the enemy conducted a tank-infantry attack against Kontum. The attack was repulsed when enemy forces came under heavy supporting fire and tactical air strikes, destroying eight enemy tanks. On 21 May enemy pressure increased. Several salients developed in the defensive lines; however, ARVN forces were successful in eliminating them before nightfall. On 25 May enemy sappers penetrated the defense and occupied the southeast portion of the city. The following day the enemy launched attacks along the northern defenses of Kontum and from within the southeast section of the city. The attacks from the north were supported by tanks. Twelve enemy tanks were destroyed in this action. Penetration of the ARVN

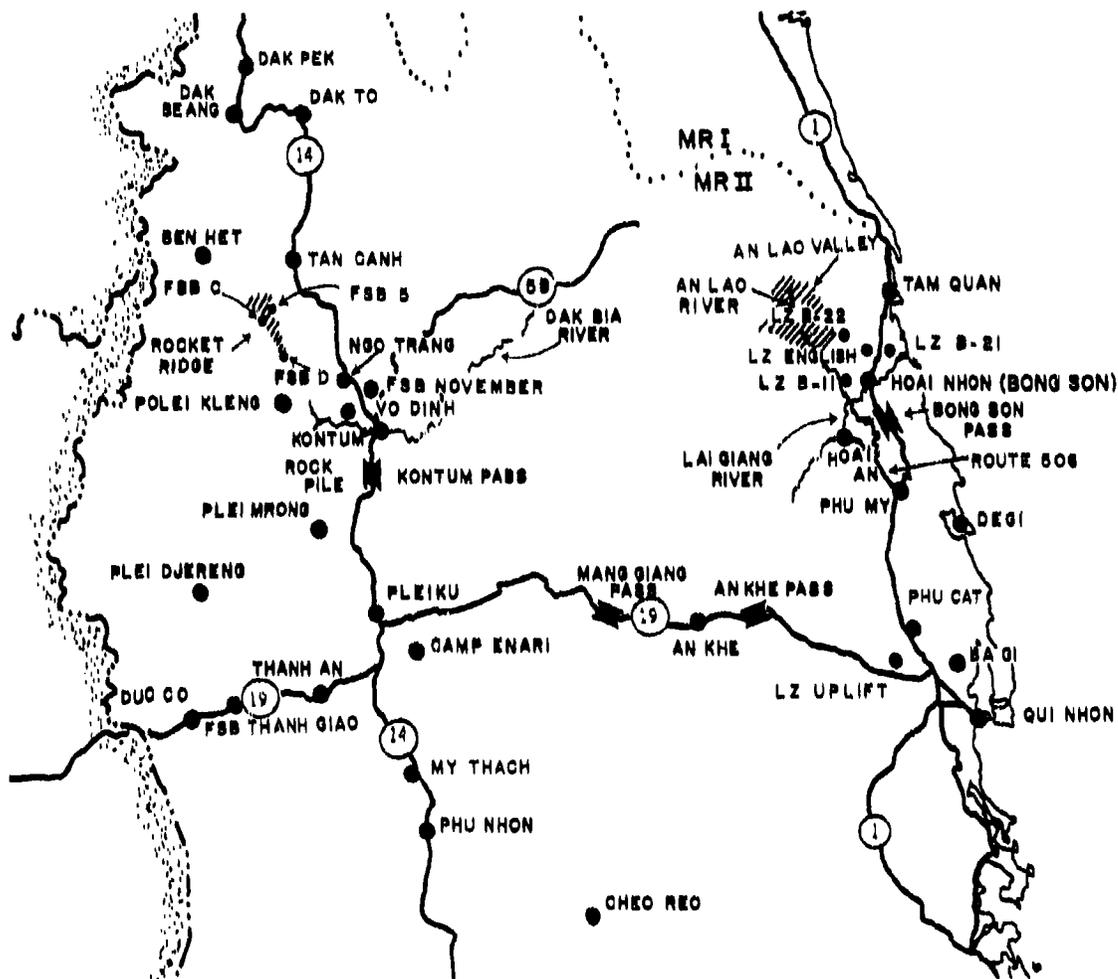
defense allowed the enemy to occupy strongpoints in the north, northeast, and southeast portions of the city. After three days of heavy fighting the enemy attacks subsided. As the month ended ARVN forces were concentrating on eliminating the enemy strongpoints within the city.

(C) In May the enemy offensive began to affect Pleiku Province significantly. At the beginning of the month combat activity was centered around the Plei Mrong Ranger Camp and the Kontum Pass area along Route 14. Numerous attacks-by-fire and light ground probes were conducted against the Plei Mrong defenders. Route 14 was blocked at Kontum Pass for the entire month, forcing resupply of Kontum by air. On 4 May an operation to open the pass was initiated. The Airborne Brigade attacked the pass area from the north, and the 45th Regiment attacked from the south. The units proceeded through the pass area but were unsuccessful in opening Route 14. Again on 21 May ARVN forces, consisting of the 2d Ranger Group, 6th Ranger Group, and 3d Armored Cavalry Squadron, commenced an operation to clear Kontum Pass and open Route 14. The first phase of the operation went according to plan and met only light resistance. Two ranger battalions were air assaulted into the Rock Pile with instructions to link up with units moving north on Route 14 in the pass area. On 23 May the cavalry and ranger units moving north on Route 14 met stubborn enemy resistance and progress was slowed. Fighting continued in the pass area for the remainder of the month.

(C) As May began, the enemy controlled Binh Dinh Province north of the Bong Son Pass except for Landing Zone English and Tam Quan district town. On 1 May the Territorial Forces defending Tam Quan withdrew to LZ English. The 403d Sapper Battalion continually increased pressure on English with heavy attacks-by-fire and ground attacks. On the night of 2 May English was evacuated. The South Vietnamese moved overland to the coast, where approximately 2,000 military and civilian personnel were evacuated by LST to Qui Nhon. During the remainder of the month, no significant combat activity was reported in the province, as enemy activity decreased and the ARVN 40th Regiment stood down for reorganization and refitting. On 19 May Headquarters, 22d ARVN Division, displaced from Pleiku to Ba GI and assumed the responsibility for Binh Dinh Province.

(C) During June the level of combat activity in Military Region 2 decreased slightly. In Kontum Province combat activity was at a moderate level the first seven days of the month as 23d Division units cleared enemy pockets from Kontum. On 8 June the Kontum airfield was opened. The level of activity tapered off and was light for the re-

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 2-6

mainder of the month. ARVN units continued clearing operations northwest and north of the city, out to 15 kilometers northwest and nine kilometers north of the city. On 17 June a successful raid was conducted into the Tan Canh area. A reconnaissance company from the 23d Division combat assaulted into a landing zone immediately north of Tan Canh, then swept south through the city, seizing limited terrain objectives. Three brief, but sharp, engagements were made with enemy forces, resulting in one ARVN wounded and 24 enemy killed. In addition, five Molatova trucks and two jeeps were reported destroyed. After approximately three hours in the area the forces were extracted, along with nine soldiers from the 22d Division and 7 civilians found in the area. The purpose of the operation was to establish ARVN's ability to re-

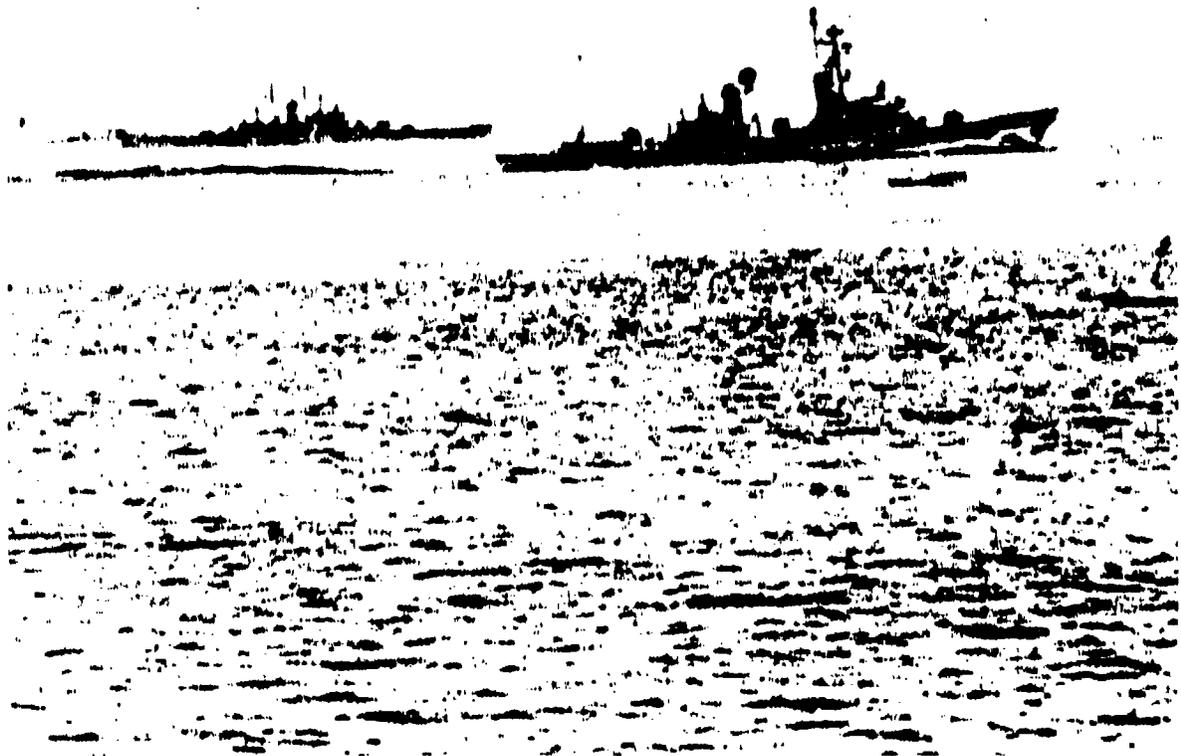
enter lost territory, exploit the psychological value of the action, and destroy enemy personnel and materiel.

(C) In Pleiku Province combat activity was centered around the Kontum Pass area along Route 14. ARVN units continued their efforts to clear the enemy from the pass and open Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum Cities. During the first part of the month II Corps reinforced the operation with the introduction of additional ranger border defense battalions. There were 14 maneuver battalions involved in the operation under control of the II Corps Tactical Command Post. Slow progress was made as ARVN units reported numerous sharp contacts and close-in fighting against a determined enemy. Tactical air and artillery provided support and many significant body finds were reported,

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indicating heavy casualties suffered by the enemy. Enemy resistance began to slacken on 26 June as ARVN units secured the high ground east and west of the highway. The highway was opened on 30 June and a military convoy of 86 vehicles traveled from Pleiku to Kontum City without incident.

(C) In Binh Dinh Province activity was at a low level the entire month. The enemy harassed ARVN and territorial units in Phu My District with sporadic attacks-by-fire and occasional ground probes. South Vietnamese units were employed securing their fire bases and Route 1.



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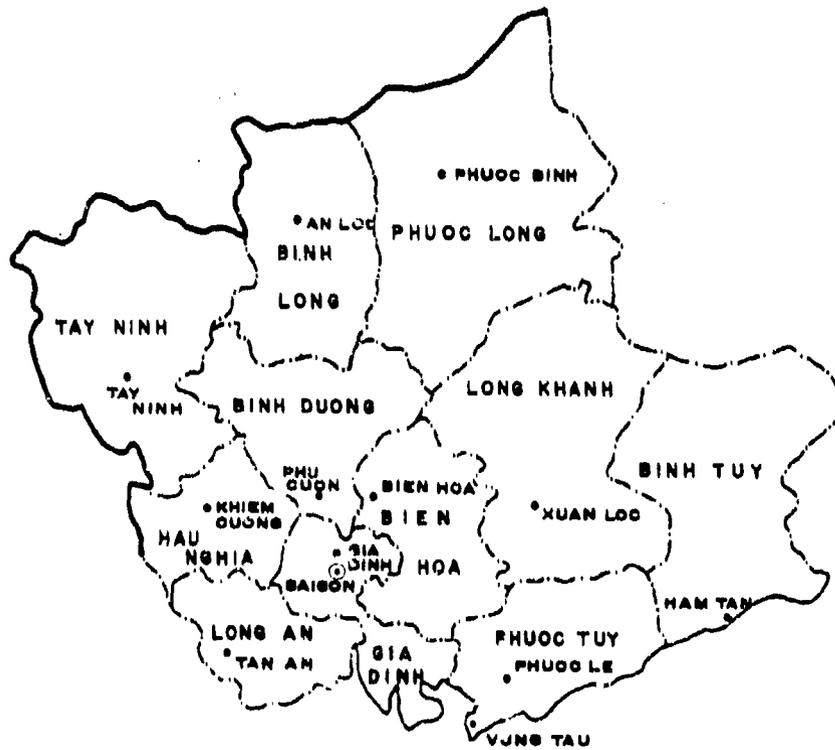
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An ARVN lieutenant adjusts artillery on an enemy position.

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Source: MACDI

Figure: 2-7

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MILITARY REGION 3

(C) The enemy offensive broke in Military Region 3 within a week of the invasion through the Demilitarized Zone in the North. An initial feint was made in northern Tay Ninh Province, when enemy forces attacked and overran a South Vietnamese fire support base on 2 April (Fig. 2-7). The feint was of sufficient size and intensity to keep the III Corps Commander's attention in the Tay Ninh area, and it further obscured the exact location of the main effort in the expected enemy offensive. Binh Long Province remained high on the list of likely areas for the enemy's main thrust. Accordingly, two regimental size forces expanded their security operations in the northern and western areas of Binh Long. However, when the enemy main attack was triggered in Binh Long by the assault on Loc Ninh, he had gained tactical surprise by successfully evading and enveloping these security forces (Fig. 2-8).

(C) III Corps forces were conducting primarily defensive operations centered in Binh Long Province, along Route 13 to An Loc in central Binh Long, and near Chon Thanh to the south. On 4 and 5 April enemy ground probes and indirect fire against Loc Ninh, An Loc, and Quan Loi increased sharply. On 5 April the enemy attacked Loc Ninh in force supported by tanks and artillery. The bulk of RVNAF regular forces at Loc Ninh were enveloped in their forward security positions. Two ARVN infantry battalions, one cavalry squadron, and one ranger border defense battalion, plus the supporting artillery, were rendered ineffective. About 150 individual survivors made their way to An Loc. The two compounds at Loc Ninh were defended for two days by a small force of territorials, a few regulars, and US advisors. The skillful employment of US TACAIR by the US advisors prevented the immediate fall of the compounds. However, on 7 April the friendly forces were destroyed or captured, and Loc Ninh fell to the enemy.

(C) To the south of Loc Ninh the 52th Infantry Task Force came under enemy pressure and was ordered to move south and reinforce An Loc. The task force first encountered an enemy roadblock after which the heavy equipment and vehicles were ordered destroyed by the task force commander and the elements continued on foot around the roadblock. After moving back to Route 13 further south, the column was ambushed and suffered heavy casualties. About 850 men of the 1,000 man task force arrived at An Loc on 8, 9, and 10 April.

(C) On 6 April the 3d Ranger Group reinforced An Loc and on 10 and 11 April the 8th Regiment, with two of its battalions, was moved by US helicopters to the city. On 11 April nine maneuver

battalions, some understrength, and miscellaneous support elements were consolidated at An Loc. On 13 April the 9th VC Division commenced its attack with daily tank-supported ground attacks and 6th Artillery Command attacks-by-fire of over a thousand rounds per day. Friendly forces began reinforcing immediately and on the 15th, three airborne battalions air assaulted southeast of An Loc, fought their way into the city and linked up by the 18th of April. The Military Region 4, 21st Division's lead regiment reached a position 30 kilometers south of An Loc on 16 April. The 51st Airborne Ranger Group was later inserted at An Loc, bringing the forces to a peak of 13 battalions. The An Loc defenders withstood daily, heavy attacks from 12 to 22 April before the enemy pressure decreased. The 3d Airborne Brigade was air landed north of Chon Thanh on 26 April to attack north along Route 13 and had progressed to a position eight kilometers south of An Loc by 30 April. The friendly forces seized the initiative during the last week of April and began to conduct ground operations up to four kilometers from An Loc. Resupply of the An Loc forces was primarily by airdrop, with limited helicopter landings.

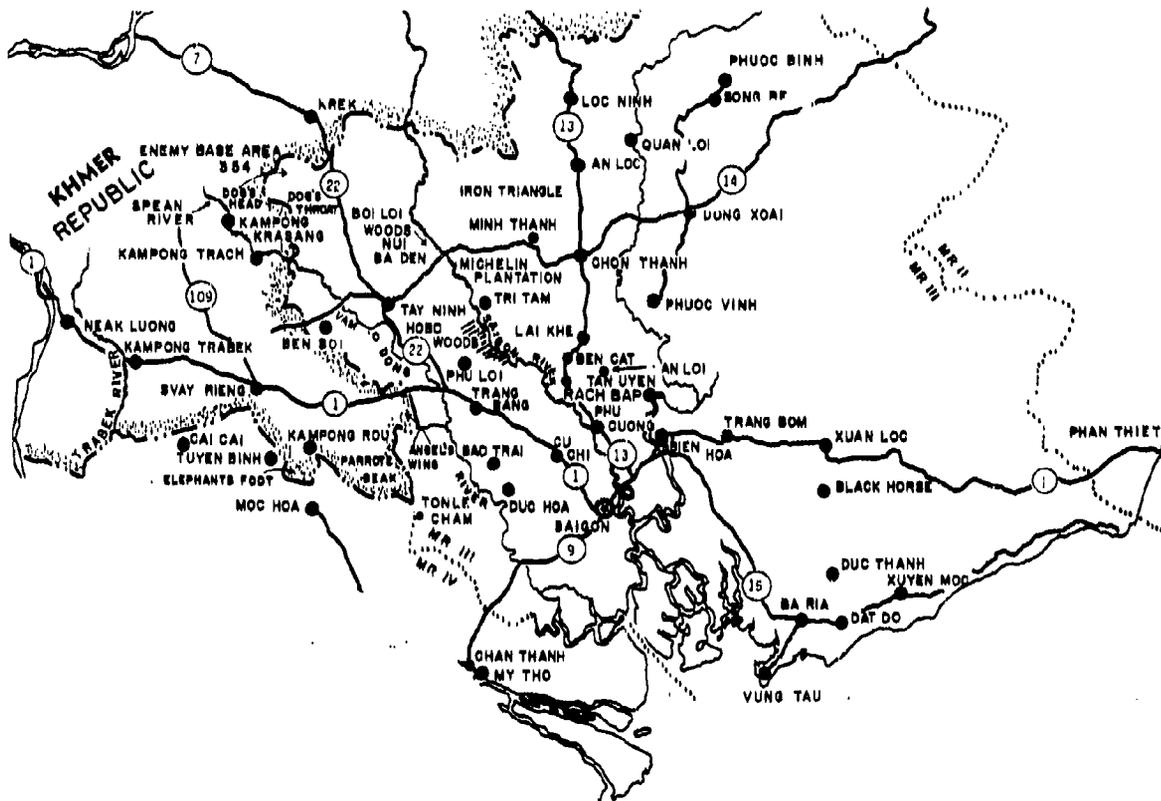
(C) In Tay Ninh Province on 5 April the enemy pressure by the 271st NVA Independent Regiment and the 24th NVA Regiment in northern Tay Ninh Province increased. The border ranger battalion positions received heavy indirect fire and ground attacks. Friendly positions near Tay Ninh City also received attacks-by-fire, and just north of the city a major ambush inflicted heavy casualties on an ARVN battalion. Reacting to this enemy activity, the 25th ARVN Division withdrew its outposts and consolidated defensive positions around Tay Ninh City.

(C) The siege of An Loc continued throughout May. Friendly forces, although receiving an average of 500 rounds of indirect fire daily, continued local patrols and expanded the perimeter during the first part of the month. Operations were conducted as far as four kilometers from the perimeter on 1 May.

(C) During the period 10 through 15 May friendly forces at An Loc withstood a severe test of their willingness and capability to defend against an all out attack by the 9th VC Division. Heavy indirect fire started about midnight on 10 May, followed by tank supported ground attacks from the south, southeast, east, and west. Eight B-52 strikes were placed on the outskirts of the city. By noon ARVN troops stopped the attack with effective support from tactical air, gunships, and B-52 strikes. An unknown number of enemy were killed by air strikes and artillery fire while fleeing from the B-52 target areas.

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Source: MACMH8

Figure: 2-8

(C) Early on the morning of the 12th, the 9th VC Division resumed its attack, but it lacked the intensity of the day before and by mid-morning had been stopped. Later in the day the enemy attacked again and penetrated the western sector of the perimeter. By midnight ARVN forces had contained the penetration. Heavy indirect fire and direct tank fire continued throughout the night. Again B-52s were used near the city, with six strikes during the night. The South Vietnamese restored the perimeter by noon on the 13th. The forces at An Loc conducted an area defense for the remainder of the month.

(C) On 4 May the 7th NVA Division elements increased pressure on the 21st Division forces attacking north toward An Loc along Route 13. The 21st Division consolidated its forward positions on 8 May by combat assaulting a 31st Regiment battalion several kilometers to the north. The 3d Airborne Brigade moved south along Route 13 and linked up with the battalion. On 12 May the 15th Regiment, from Military Region 4, moved to the III Corps area and was attached to the 21st Division.

The 15th Regiment was committed on 15 May as the 21st Division renewed its effort to move north along Route 13. The 3d Airborne Brigade was withdrawn from the 21st Division area of operations on 16 May for redeployment to Quang Tri Province in Military Region 1. The 15th Regiment became the lead element along Route 13 and reached a position about five kilometers south of An Loc on 18 May.

(C) The 7th NVA Division persisted in its efforts to prevent the 21st Division from relieving An Loc. Early on 20 May both the 15th and 33d Regiments repelled tank supported attacks five to seven kilometers south of An Loc, killing 80 enemy and destroying six tanks, while sustaining 15 dead. The 21st Division made little progress during the month as enemy pressure continued with sporadic indirect fire and ground attacks. On the night of 24-25 May elements of the 21st Division suffered heavy casualties in an enemy ambush 12 kilometers south of An Loc along Route 13. ARVN losses were 42 killed, 159 wounded, and 23 armored personnel carriers destroyed.

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(C) The enemy buildup in Tay Ninh Province in April culminated in heavy fighting between the 25th ARVN Division and the 271st NVA Independent Regiment during the period 28 April to 2 May. In several contacts around the Angel's Wing ARVN killed 200 and found evidence that over 150 bodies had been evacuated to the Khmer Republic. MG James F. Hollingsworth, commander of the Third Regional Assistance Command, and COL Le Van Tu, commanding the 25th ARVN Division, estimated that the 271st Regiment suffered 70 percent casualties in dead and wounded. This estimate was borne out during the month by reports indicating that the regiment was attempting to avoid major engagements and was undergoing refitting and retraining. During the remainder of May little major enemy initiated activity was attributed to the 271st. Two Regional Force companies, making contact with probable elements of the regiment on 11 May in northern Hau Nghia, killed 62 enemy and captured 46 weapons while sustaining five wounded. The cooperation and coordination between VNAF tactical air and the Territorial Forces in operations against the 271st Regiment were noteworthy.

(C) On 9 May the 25th Division area of operations was extended south, taking in all of the Angel's Wing and portions of Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces. This allowed the division to coordinate and direct the ARVN and Territorial Forces operations throughout the threat area. COL Tu shifted a majority of his maneuver elements to Hau Nghia Province to counter the increased activity there. On the 14th of May the 271st Regiment was again mauled in northwestern Hau Nghia Province. The 1st Battalion, 50th Regiment, 25th Division, made contact and killed 138 while sustaining 19 dead. The next day the 43d Regiment killed 21 enemy in northern Hau Nghia in an engagement with an unidentified enemy unit. A Regional Force unit in Hau Nghia found 41 enemy bodies on 14 May.

(C) The joint ARVN and Territorial Force operation continued to succeed. On the 18th a Regional Force unit killed 47 enemy in Duc Hue District, western Hau Nghia Province. In three contacts in Hau Nghia on 19 May, 62 enemy were killed with government losses of three dead.

(C) On 10 May a battalion task force of six companies moved to Phuoc Tuy Province to counter increased enemy activity. On 17 May, in a contact six kilometers southwest of Duc Thanh, the friendly force killed 92 enemy, probably members of the 274th VC Regiment. Friendly forces losses were six killed and 13 wounded. On 20 May one-third of the town of Dat Do in southern Phuoc Tuy Province was lost to the 33d NVA Regiment. Xuyen Moc and Duc Thanh remained in friendly hands but were

isolated and had to be supplied by air. The Phuoc Tuy Province Chief was replaced on 21 May. On the 22d in a contact east of Dat Do an ARVN battalion killed 31 enemy, possibly from the 33d Regiment, without friendly casualties. On 24 May the 5th Ranger Group, with three battalions, was deployed to Phuoc Tuy and began conducting operations in the vicinity of Dat Do. In significant contacts there the ranger group killed 75 enemy one kilometer west of Dat Do on 28 May, and on the 29th in the same area killed 51, while sustaining light casualties.

(C) The siege of An Loc entered its third month in June; enemy pressure was at a lower level than in May. Up to the 10th of the month daily fire of about 300 rounds and intense ground-to-air fire effectively isolated the city. Very few air landed missions were flown into the city the first part of the month. Consequently, there was limited evacuation of wounded personnel and few replacements were taken in. The situation began to improve on 8 June as friendly patrols commenced clearing small pockets of the enemy from the northern parts of the city. At the same time elements of the 8th Airborne Battalion from An Loc linked up with a company of the 6th Airborne Battalion 1.5 kilometers south of the city. Additional elements linked up on 9 June and began consolidating and occupying the dominant terrain on the southern approach. On 10 June the enemy's siege of An Loc began to erode as the first substantial air landed operation into the city since the siege began was conducted by Vietnamese helicopters. Over 100 wounded personnel were evacuated and 113 replacements taken in. The next day 119 replacements were taken in and 128 wounded brought out. On 11 June an exodus of refugees began; approximately 1,000 were reported moving south along Route 13. On the 12th of June 2,000 refugees had been moved to assistance centers in Lai Khe and An Loi in Binh Dinh Province.

(C) The friendly situation continued to improve during the remainder of the month. Although the 7th NVA Division still blocked movement along Route 13, its effective isolation of An Loc was broken. On the 13th two additional battalions were inserted and occupied positions on the southern approaches. Forces in the city were reinforced with unit and individual replacements. The remainder of the month was characterized by sporadic enemy attacks-by-fire and small ground contacts, as friendly forces expanded and cleared the perimeter and conducted local patrolling. The overall size of the force in An Loc remained about the same during the month although replacements were brought in and exchanges of units were made.

(C) The 21st Division area of responsibility was astride Route 13 bounded on the north by the 84

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east-west grid (five kilometers south of An Loc) and on the south by the 75 east-west grid. On 4 June the division was reinforced when the 6th Airborne Battalion and a reconnaissance company were air assaulted into a landing zone nine kilometers south of An Loc. Sporadic contact was made as the 21st Division conducted short range operations in the northern sector of its area. On 6 June a total of 56 enemy were killed and 22 weapons captured in four separate contacts. The 6th Airborne Battalion attacked north and on the 8th killed 100 enemy as it reached a point 1.5 kilometers south of An Loc. On the same day the 6th Airborne Battalion linked up with the 8th Airborne Battalion, which was operating from An Loc. On 21 June the Airborne Brigade was extracted from positions south of An Loc along Route 18 and returned to the Saigon-Bien Hoa area. The 43d Regiment was airlifted in to replace the airborne brigade. During the remainder of June the 21st Division conducted local operations and consolidated its positions astride

Route 18. The 15th Regiment was detached from the 21st Division and returned to Military Region 4 on 24 June.

(C) In the remainder of the III Corps area in June there were infrequent scattered contacts. In Hau Nghia Province on 4 June Territorial Forces, supported by American and South Vietnamese tactical air, killed 28 enemy, while losing 12 killed themselves. In Phuoc Tuy Province on 11 June in a contact supported by American tactical aircraft, 54 enemy, probably from the 274th VC Regiment, were reported killed by air strikes. In Phuoc Tuy Province on 16 June, government rangers killed 43 enemy in two contacts. In Tay Ninh Province on 22 June, a Regional Force company repulsed an attack on its defensive position, killing 36 enemy troops. On 29 June in Phuoc Tuy Province, ten kilometers east of Dat Do, the 52d Regiment engaged an enemy force and killed 68 enemy soldiers, while losing two dead and 23 wounded.



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Movement through a Delta waterway is aided by a local boat.

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Source: MACDI

Figure: 2.9

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MILITARY REGION 4

(C) Enemy and friendly activity in the lush Delta area of Military Region 4 was localized for the most part. Significantly, the 21st ARVN Division and the 16th Regiment were taken from the Delta to assist in the defense of An Loc and the 4th Ranger Group was moved to Military Region 1 during the dark days of the early battles. Even more significantly, the Delta did not erupt in support for the Viet Cong or the North Vietnamese while the regular army units were elsewhere. As was expected, enemy activity increased somewhat, but Territorial Forces generally proved capable of handling the problems whenever and where ever they occurred. There were two aspects of the ongoing, active, but nonetheless low level, war in IV Corps area: one was the struggle against the enemy in South Vietnam; the other was the cross-border operations in the Khmer Republic (Fig. 2-9).

(C) Within the IV Corps area in early April, combat activity was characterized by scattered attacks against Territorial Force outposts and small unit contacts, most of which were friendly initiated. Although activity was light, all South Vietnamese units were placed in a field readiness posture. A Corps wide DONG KOI operation was conducted during the period 3-5 April, resulting in 175 enemy killed, 28 detained and 16 weapons captured. Friendly losses were 20 killed, 116 wounded, six missing, and five weapons lost. Enemy initiated activity increased sharply on 8 April. The reduction of troop density as a result of 21st Division elements moving to III Corps possibly caused the increase. Aggressive action by Territorial Forces prevented the enemy from achieving substantial gains. The 7th and 9th ARVN Divisions shifted areas of responsibility to cover the entire IV Corps area. Although contacts were widely scattered, Kien Tuong Province reported the most incidents. Activity increased also in Chuong Thien Province during mid-month as the enemy concentrated his efforts toward disrupting pacification programs. IV Corps committed additional forces in the north-central provinces to meet the increased enemy activity in the Kien Tuong-Kien Phong-Dinh Tuong tri-border area. This area continued to report the highest number of incidents, both attacks-by-fire and ground contacts throughout the remainder of the month. On 25 April ranger elements were shifted to northern Kien Tuong to interdict infiltration routes into the tri-border area. The following day elements of the 7th Division conducted ground and airmobile operations in northern Kien Tuong Province. The operation continued as the month ended.

(C) In the Khmer Republic, during cross border operations, fighting centered in the Kompong Trach area (Fig. 2-10). On 4 April a ranger battalion

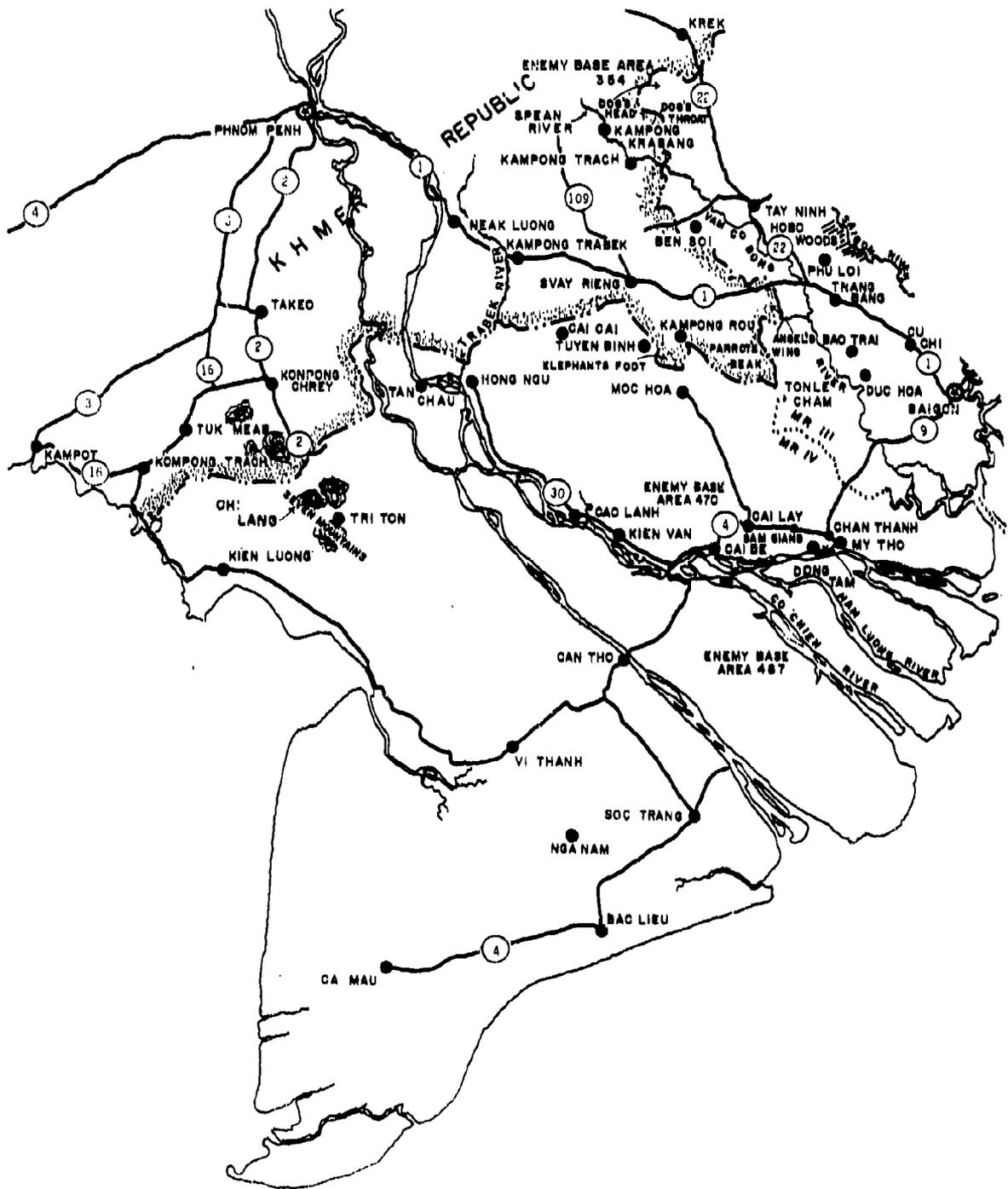
was encircled by the 271st Regiment, C30B NVA Division. Tactical air and artillery enabled the unit to break out of the encirclement on 5 April. Government losses were 16 killed, 124 wounded, and 13 tracked vehicles and 63 weapons lost. Enemy losses were unknown. Again on 7 April a ranger battalion reported itself surrounded near Kompong Trach. Results were reported as 50 enemy killed against ARVN losses of four killed, 16 wounded, 40 missing, and 44 weapons lost. Activity returned to a low level for several days until, on 12 April, ARVN ranger and armored cavalry units were engaged by an estimated four battalions of the C30B Division. Results of the battle were 163 enemy killed, while ARVN lost 8 killed and 42 wounded. The ARVN elements were encircled within Kompong Trach on the following day. Resupply by helicopter was abandoned because of heavy ground fire; air drop became the primary resupply means. A FANK battalion linked up with the ARVN forces from the west on 16 April, as additional armored cavalry elements pushed toward the city from the south. Daily attempts at relief were unsuccessful until 25 April, when the link-up was accomplished. Two B-52 strikes in the Kompong Trach area on 28 April, resulting in the reduction of enemy pressure, enabled the South Vietnamese soldiers to break the siege with little resistance on 30 April and return to South Vietnam.

(C) During May friendly initiated incidents averaged 88 per day, from a low of 17 on 1 May to a high of 75 on 20 May. Enemy losses from friendly initiated incidents were 3,867 killed and 1,136 detained. Friendly losses were 981 dead, 3,486 wounded, and 435 missing.

(C) at the beginning of May activity focused in the tri-border area of Kien Tuong - Dinh Tuong - Kien Phong Provinces. The enemy initiated activity in this area continued the pattern of attacks-by-fire and ground attacks against Territorial Force outposts, while avoiding decisive engagements with regular forces. As enemy incidents increased, ARVN reacted by concentrating air strikes and conducting mobile operations. In the tri-border area, activity continually increased during the first week of the month. On 9 May a contact in western Kien Phong Province, with elements of the 275th Regiment, 5th NVA Division, resulted in 46 enemy killed and friendly losses of two killed and six wounded. This contact followed a sapper attack on Moc Hoa airfield that destroyed 43,000 liters of fuel. By 10 May the 7th Division had several battalions operating with Territorial Forces in the three provinces. Activity decreased sharply after B-52 strikes, concentrated tactical air support, and several significant engagements.

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 2-10

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On 8 May the 4th Ranger Group returned to the delta from Military Region 1 for reorganization and refitting. On 12 May the 15th Regiment, 9th NVA Division departed for Military Region 3 and the Route 13 operation. At approximately the same time the focus of activity shifted from the eastern area to the western provinces of Kien Giang, Chuong Thien, and An Xuyen.

Enemy activity in Kien Giang Province showed the pattern of attacks observed in the Kien Giang Republic during April. Market places were raided, government buildings were destroyed, and homes were burned. On 19 May the town of Kien Giang was attacked by an estimated two companies of the 52d Regiment, 1st NVA Division. Three Regional Force companies and a ranger battalion were committed to the area. By 24 May the town had been secured; however, the enemy still held the cement plant and the high ground along the coast. In six days of fighting around Kien Giang, 184 enemy were killed with light ARVN casualties. The cement plant was secured on 26 May and the high ground along the coast by the following day.

The western Chuong Thien Province area was active during the last half of the month as elements of the 95A, 18B, and D1 Regiments attacked local outposts with mortars and ground attacks. Mobile Territorial Forces were shifted to the area to replace the 15th Regiment, which had been moved to Military Region 3. A moderate level of activity was reported throughout the rest of the month.

In cross-border operations activity was at a low level following the Kompong Trach operation which ended on 30 April. Final results of that operation were 1,140 enemy killed and 224 friendly ARVN wounded and 153 missing. Government forces also reported 324 weapons and 56 armored vehicles lost.

No further cross-border operations were initiated until 18 May. In response to reports that elements of the 1st NVA Division were east of Tuk Meas, two ranger battalions were inserted into the Kompong Mountains area. The following day three

additional ranger battalions and an armored cavalry squadron were deployed to the area with the mission of spoiling enemy attempts to infiltrate personnel and supplies into western Chau Doc and Kien Giang Provinces. Although numerous small contacts were reported, the enemy division avoided any decisive engagements. As the month ended, activity in the 44th Special Tactical Zone area of operations was at a low level.

(C) Combat activity in Military Region 4 in June focused in Northern Kien Tuong Province and in the cross-border area known as the Elephant's Foot. At the beginning of June the South Vietnamese Army redeployed additional forces to exploit successful encounters with the 5th NVA Division at the end of May. Ranger battalions were also employed across the border in the vicinity of Tuk Meas during the month.

(C) On 1 June, in reaction to intelligence information received on 31 May, ranger elements surrounded an enemy force approximately five kilometers south of Tuk Meas. Eight sorties of VNAF tactical air supported the engagement which resulted in 133 enemy killed. Ranger losses were six killed and 17 wounded.

(C) On 10 June a sharp increase in enemy activity caused ARVN to deploy a ranger battalion to Kien Tuong Province to counter an attack by elements of the 275th Regiment, 5th NVA Division on the district town of Tuyen Binh. Over 20 tactical air sorties were flown in support of the contact. At the same time the 12th Regiment commenced operations in the Cai Lay-Cai Be area of Dinh Tuong Province. On 11 June the 12th Regiment assumed operational control of all forces in Kien Tuong Province. Results on the 11th were 105 enemy killed with no ARVN casualties. Across the border another 68 were killed. Also on the 11th, territorial units repulsed an attack by the D2 Regiment on the district town of Nga Nam, Ba Xuyen Province, killing 53 enemy and capturing 20 weapons. On the 12th the 12th Regiment reported heavy contact with the 6th Regiment, 5th NVA Division in the Elephant's Foot area of north Kien Tuong Province. In two major contacts 116 enemy were killed.



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CHAPTER 3

SOUTH VIETNAMESE COUNTEROFFENSIVE:

JULY - OCTOBER 1972

(U) The period from July through October was one of cautious hope as the ARVN fought to regain lost territory, diplomatic moves raised hopes for peace, and the US withdrawal continued. July was a month of hope for the South Vietnamese. The US-USSR summit raised hopes for peace and ARVN began counteroffensives to retake lost territory in Quang Tri and Binh Dinh Provinces. President Thieu was granted powers of emergency rule in the fields of national defense, security, finance, and economy for six months. President Nixon's 28 June and 20 August announcements of further US withdrawals were favorably received by the Saigon press, which felt that the US had shown strong backing in the intensive air offensive directed against the enemy and the delivery of equipment to the RVNAF. There was some speculation that South Vietnam's negotiating position at the Paris talks had improved substantially. The announcement in July that Korean forces would be withdrawn after the offensive was taken in stride by the Vietnamese. The trend was clearly toward peace; visits by MG Alexander Haig in July and September and Dr. Henry Kissinger in August and October to consult with President Thieu kept alive speculation that a ceasefire was near. As the RVNAF slowly pushed the enemy back, retaking Quang Tri City on 15 September, and seeking to open lines of communication, President Thieu was consolidating his government. Although virtually all of the political parties and groups denounced the Communists, they were not prepared to fully support President Thieu, who then formed his own political party. Under his emergency powers Thieu suspended hamlet chief elections, reformed local administration and set strict rules for the press in an effort to solidify the government and promote national unity. He also continued to insist that the conditions for a ceasefire must include withdrawal of the NVA/VC and renunciation of violence if they wished a place in South Vietnam's government. Thieu also offered to resign to allow independent elections. The Saigon press began speculating in October that President Nixon would not sacrifice South Vietnamese interests in an attempt to gain a pre-election ceasefire.

(U) The Communist parties' view in June was not as optimistic as it had been the previous two months. Hanoi expressed dissatisfaction with the US-USSR summit, reminding the Russians of obli-

gations to their socialist allies. Claims of victory were supplemented with warnings that the North Vietnamese would be forced to undergo more difficulties and hardships before victory was complete. Early in July the North's negotiator for the ceasefire, Xuan Thuy, returned to Paris. Hanoi declared that every able-bodied citizen of working age would be mobilized to defeat the US aggressor. Exhortations to rally their people and rather pointed suggestions that the USSR and PRC were sacrificing North Vietnam's interests characterized Hanoi's propaganda through October. On 28 October Hanoi announced the peace agreement and set 31 October for the signing, a date ignored by the US and South Vietnam.

(C) During the summer and early fall months MACV continued to redeploy US troops and equipment, assist the RVNAF, and plan for the ceasefire. In August the last US ground combat elements, Task Forces GIMLET and GARRY OWEN, redeployed. From a US force of nearly 64,000 on 1 June, only about half that number remained by the end of October. MACV responsibility for strategic PSYOP was transferred to CINCPAC on 1 July. MACV continued to support RVNAF operations with TACAIR, B-52, NGFS, and US Army aviation during the period. Further reduction in the strength of MACV caused planners to make hard choices on which units and functions would be deleted. In implementing the 1 July 40,000 man force structure, GEN Weyand directed that the force structure be reviewed and modified to accommodate those US assets which contributed most to destruction of the enemy, to the assistance of the Vietnamese government and the combat performance of the RVNAF, and to the receipt and use of equipment being furnished under Project ENHANCE. Further troop cuts were ordered during the period which resulted in additional planning to consolidate or eliminate functions and units. Installation turnovers, reduced missions, and the move of USARV/MACV SUPCOM from Long Binh to Saigon resulted in reduced manpower needs.

(U) The period from July through October was one of slowly beginning recovery for the people of South Vietnam. The enemy was busy trying to rebuild his shattered units, as friendly forces moved on the offensive, retaking Quang Tri City, the lost portions of Binh Dinh Province, and seeking out the enemy to keep him off balance. Politically,

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Troopers from the 8d Battalion, 21st Infantry, part of Task Force GIMLET, dismount their helicopters on 10 August as they return from the field. Task Force GIMLET was the last US ground combat unit employed in Vietnam.

there were continued rumors of a cease-fire played up in the press, while President Thieu's reforms of local elections and administration were greeted with apathy. Where there was little fighting, development programs were resumed. The refugee population had stabilized, allowing government officials to focus on resettlement of refugees in camps. Dr. Kissinger's late October announcement of an impending cease-fire was coincident with a short-lived enemy attempt to capture hamlets throughout the country.

(U) Terrorism remained high throughout the four months from July through October, as the VC attempted to remind people of their presence through rocket attacks, bombings, abductions, and assassinations. In Military Region 1 enemy attention was focused on the three southern provinces where he was driven out after capturing several district towns. As Quang Tri City was regained, the enemy was driven back from Hue, relieving the city from sporadic shelling. In Military Region 2, enemy activity continued in Kontum, Pleiku, Binh Dinh, and

Phu Yen, as the rest of the region was quiet. Military Region 3 was relatively quiet although enemy activity near Saigon increased. Some enemy pressure continued in the southern portion of the Delta in Chuong Thien Province, but the enemy changed his focus to Kien Hoa and Go Cong Provinces in the northern Delta.

(U) The National Police and PSDF continued to assume security missions in the populated areas, allowing the Territorial Forces to operate in a mobile role and to sometimes join with the ARVN for field operations. On balance, the Territorials did well in spite of reorganizations and a lack of training. Their performance was hampered somewhat by a "cease-fire mentality" which extended to a degree to both sides.

(U) Decree Law 120, which abolished hamlet elections and reduced the number of village and hamlet officials, was regarded with little interest by the general public. The reduced number of officials lessened the financial burden on the villagers and allowed President Thieu to enhance his powers

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by appointing his own men to local posts.

(U) Development moved out of the doldrums as land reform, public works, local revenue improvement, and village self-development projects moved ahead. During summer and the early fall months the economy of South Vietnam stabilized, even though industrial production remained depressed. On the plus side, the US in-country procurement program was expected to stimulate local manufacturing and construction. The flexible exchange rate policy and import subsidy program adopted by the government combined to stimulate exports. In addition, a complete tax overhaul was in the offing. On the negative side, textiles and beverages, the country's two largest industries, continued below normal production. Further, the invasion and adverse weather reduced the rice crop about ten percent below estimates.

(C) Project ENHANCE deliveries of materiel to the RVNAF continued throughout the period. The replacement of combat losses had progressed so that by early August the ARVN and VNMC equipment levels approximated those immediately preceding the enemy offensive. A Vietnamese Navy ENHANCE activity to improve the supply support effectiveness of the Vietnamese Naval Supply Center (VNNSC) was completed in late August. A US Navy technical team had developed a comprehensive warehousing and inventories program to provide the VNN a capability to properly manage the VNNSC, initially assisted by a maximum advisory effort. This activity was closely aligned with a training program aboard VNN blue water ships to develop a viable fleet supply system and to train storekeepers aboard ships to handle large supplies of repair parts which were then in-country awaiting placement on ships.

(U) The logistics facilities transfer progressed as the ARVN assumed the overall responsibility for Cam Ranh port operations on 1 September. On 1 October the Da Nang port was turned over to the ARVN; the Da Nang Port Authority assumed control of general cargo operations and subsequently handled all port operations. Similarly, the last two major bulk POL systems at Da Nang and Long Binh were turned over to the RVNAF during September.

(U) As part of the economic support program, the transfer of US scrap in Vietnam to the government was authorized in September. The Vietnam Central Logistics Agency was designated to administer the program. Including scrap brass, the estimated value was 30 million dollars.

(U) In the communications-electronics area the third quarter of 1972 was the most dynamic for Vietnamization. The transition schedule was accelerated as a result of the US withdrawal and the

highly successful performance of the RVNAF personnel at the communication sites.

(S) A combined JGS/MACV committee was formed in August 1972 to identify trade-off spaces to support Project ENHANCE and other new requirements. The final recommendations resulted in a reduction of 17 Popular Force platoons plus streamlining in all the services to allow for the new requirements. In September 1972 another combined MACV/JGS committee was formed to supervise and monitor the activation progress of new RVNAF units. In October MACV made several recommendations to JGS with respect to the upcoming RVNAF Force Structure Review for FY 74. Late in October JGS submitted a study concerning RVNAF improvement and modernization to COMUSMACV for consideration in the general categories of armor, artillery, air defense, ground maneuver forces, air force, and navy. When it was determined that a large portion of the requirements were for complex systems that were logistically demanding and were in excess of current RVNAF operational requirements, COMUSMACV informed the chief, JGS, that only the equipment in currently approved programs would be available to the RVNAF.

(C) During this period the VNAF increased in size to 49 flying squadrons with the activation of one C-7 squadron, one liaison squadron (O-1/U-17), and one EC-47 squadron. The formation of a C-119 reconnaissance squadron to provide coastal surveillance in coordination with VNN was in the final stages of planning, awaiting installation of necessary radar equipment by US contract personnel.

(S) With regard to the VNMC force structure JGS responded favorably to a MACV proposal that a one battalion amphibious raid capability be developed within the VNMC. In August MACV requested 80 LVTP-5s as an addition to Project ENHANCE.

(S) The US advisory program, while reduced in size, expanded several functions during this period to include: mobile training teams for combat infantry, armor, artillery, and ranger battalion refresher training; security training to upgrade the security of key logistical installations; special new equipment training for TOW and XM 202 flare rockets; special training for crater analysis and counter-battery techniques; and advisors for Project ENHANCE units.

(C) The average size of division advisory teams was reduced to 34 by September. The VNN advisory strength continued to be reduced, as did the AFGP advisory strength, a result of consolidations and reductions made in response to increasing Vietnamese self-sufficiency and the continued withdrawal of US forces from the Republic of Vietnam.

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AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(U) As ARVN forces recovered from the shock of the initial enemy onslaught, the ground situation improved markedly. The forces of the RVNAF were reallocated to place the best ARVN and VNMC units opposite the greatest enemy threats. Heavy air assaults on enemy troop concentrations, storage areas, and lines of communication kept the enemy from successfully following up his initial successes, thus gaining the much-needed time for the RVNAF to retrain. The Vietnamese offensive operations required air support not only in the form of close air support by helicopters and fixed wing gunships, TACAIR, and B-52 sorties, but also by the use of USMC and Army helicopters to provide combat airlift for ARVN and VNMC combat air assaults. US air cavalry units also teamed with VNAF units to provide extremely valuable intelligence information.

(S) B-52 sorties within the Republic continued to increase, reaching a peak in August of 3,407 sorties. Of this effort by far the largest concentration of targets was in Military Region 1. Many of these sorties were in preparation for ARVN and VNMC offensive operations directed toward the recapture of Quang Tri. Military Region 2 B-52

sortie levels had peaked at 891 during the assault on Kontum in May and declined during the remainder of the counteroffensive to a low of 160 sorties in October. ARC LIGHT activity in Military Region 3 was generally down from the April-May attacks on An Loc, where a monthly rate of 363 sorties was averaged. During the counteroffensive in Military Region 1, B-52 activity was light in Military Region 3. Military Region 4 had generally light ARC LIGHT support during the counteroffensive, except for a surge in July and August.

(C) The VNAF continued to expend a high percentage of its attack sorties against close air support targets during the counteroffensive. As the military situation improved, the US forces were able to reduce the proportion of their effort dedicated to close air support and return to the interdiction effort. Whenever required, however, they returned to the close air support role. The daily fixed wing attack sortie rate rose and fell moderately with the amount of enemy activity during the counteroffensive period. US Army close air support of ARVN declined steadily in almost direct proportion to the continuing drawdown of air cavalry assets.

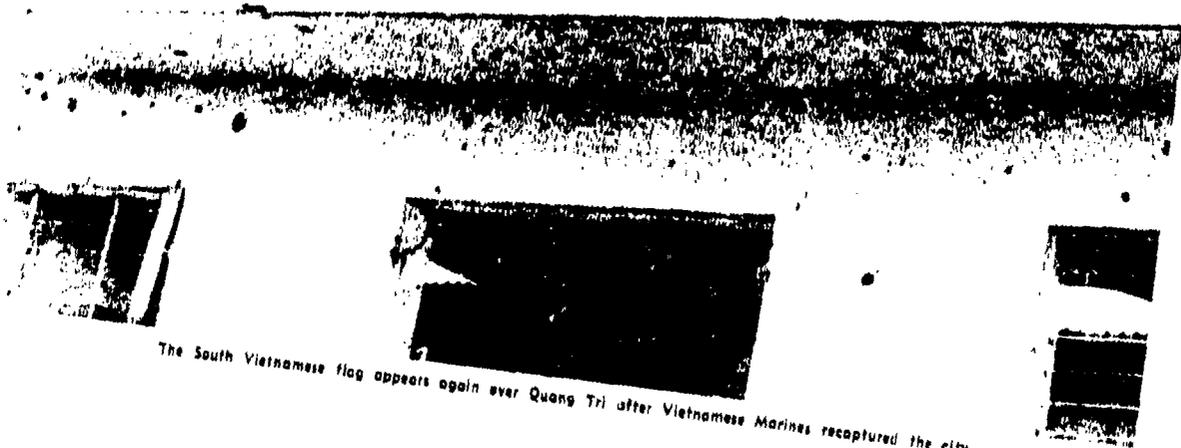


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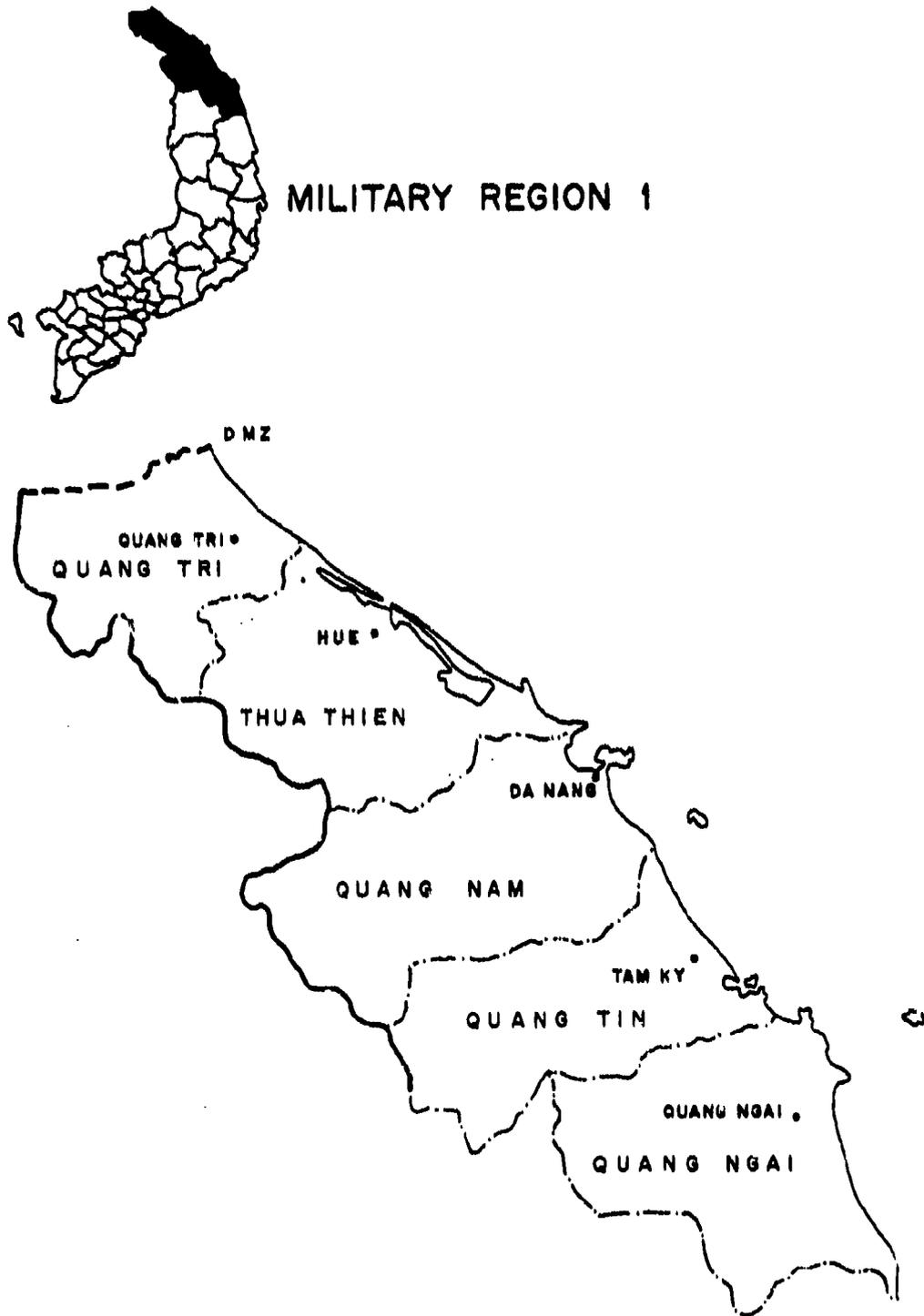
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The South Vietnamese flag appears again over Quang Tri after Vietnamese Marines recaptured the city.

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Source: MACDI

Figure: 3-1

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GROUND OPERATIONS, JULY-OCTOBER 1972

MILITARY REGION 1

(C) On 28 June I Corps plans for a counteroffensive to regain control of Quang Tri Province (Fig. 3-1) and to destroy the enemy forces there were set in motion. LTG Ngo Quang Truong seized the initiative in the wake of the North Vietnamese failure to breach the My Chanh riverline defenses, launching a coordinated attack northward with the Marine and Airborne Divisions, supported by ranger elements and units of the 1st and 2d ARVN Divisions. The Marine Division was reinforced and then attacked north in a zone bounded by the coastline in the east and Route 1 in the west (Fig. 3-2). The Marine attack began overland and by air assault into a landing zone north of Hai Lang with US Marine Corps helicopters providing the airlift. Both the troops advancing by ground and those that were airlifted met light to moderate resistance. The Airborne Division attacked north in a zone generally extending from Highway 1 to the high ground on the west. The 4th Regiment, 2d Division followed in support. The reconnaissance company of the 1st Division and the 81st Airborne Ranger Group provided flank security as the Airborne Division pushed three to five kilometers into Quang Tri Province. The airborne reported 280 enemy killed on the first day of the advance, an enemy tank and five 37mm antiaircraft weapons captured, and three enemy tanks destroyed. The offensive gained momentum in the next two days when airborne battalions combat assaulted into landing zones eight to ten kilometers north of the Thua Thien provincial boundary. Ground contacts were light; for the moment the enemy forces avoided decisive contact. In the first three days of the attack the marines reported that 368 enemy were killed, one 130mm gun and two tanks were destroyed, and one tank was captured. Marine losses were light; 25 killed, 55 wounded, and two 155mm howitzers destroyed and one damaged.

(C) The marines operating east of Route 1 made steady progress toward Quang Tri City against the 27th and 31st Regiments, B-5 Front and the 18th and 325th Regiments. By 10 July they had killed over 600 of the enemy, destroyed ten tanks, and liberated 1,150 Vietnamese civilians. On 11 July the marines conducted a combat assault, with USMC helicopters airlifting a reinforced battalion and B-52s, tactical air support, naval gunfire, and Vietnamese marine artillery providing support. The landing was made successfully despite a stout defense on the ground, and the battalion moved toward the other marine forces advancing from the south. Ground linkup was made on 15 July. Enemy losses were 245 killed, 17 tanks destroyed, and

seven artillery pieces captured. On 22 July the marines launched another combat assault into a landing zone eight kilometers northeast of Quang Tri City and conducted clearing operations in the vicinity for two days.

(C) The Airborne Division had advanced steadily as well. On 7 July airborne elements pushed into Quang Tri City and during most of the rest of the month combat activity centered in and around the city. Enemy resistance in the provincial capital was determined and well-organized. On 25 July airborne elements breached the northeast wall of the Quang Tri Citadel. After constant heavy fighting inside the fortress airborne elements withdrew as a Corps directed boundary change made the marines responsible for operations within the city. The 2d Airborne Brigade assumed a Corps reserve mission, moving to FSB Sally for refitting after participating in some of the heaviest fighting of the counteroffensive.

(C) During August the marines, reinforced by Territorial Forces, continued their primary mission of retaking the Quang Tri Citadel and secondary mission of regaining control of the province capital. On 1 August I Corps commenced a 48-hour program of preparatory fires to support the marine assault on the citadel. The program included artillery, naval gunfire, and tactical aircraft targeted at known and suspected enemy positions, particularly 130mm artillery positions in the Dong Ha area. The marine assault on 3 August failed to break the enemy defenses, although the assault was supported with over 2,000 rounds of mortar and artillery fire into the citadel on that day alone. The marines reported that 140 enemy were killed during the first three days of the month, while marine casualties were reported as light to moderate.

(C) Heavy house-to-house fighting continued near the citadel, while to the north heavy contacts developed between the Vinh Dinh and Thach Han Rivers. A B-52 strike four kilometers west of the city resulted in numerous secondary explosions, including a large explosion which sent a smoke cloud to 10,000 feet. The west bank of the Thach Han River was struck by B-52s on 8 August with large secondary explosions lasting 20 to 25 minutes. The same day US tactical air was employed to breach the Quang Tri Citadel wall and to destroy a large building being used as a fortified position. As a result, enemy mortar and recoilless rifle fires, which had been heavy prior to the air strike, were reduced.

(C) Although top priority was given to locating and destroying enemy artillery, mixed attacks-by-

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Vietnamese Marines stand in the rubble of Quang Tri.

fire against marine elements intensified after 12 August, reaching a peak of approximately 3,000 rounds on the 22d. The increased air effort probably caused some reduction in the indirect fire received by marine elements; however, 15,000 rounds was reported for the last week of the month.

(C) Ground fighting was heavy around the citadel and in an area four to seven kilometers north-northeast along Phase Line Gold. As an example, on 15 August a marine battalion engaged the enemy just south of the citadel in a four-hour battle. Ground fighting intensified on 24 August when the enemy launched a series of company-size attacks, supported by mortar and artillery fires. The contacts, which started early in the morning, subsided late in the day. The following day the attacks were less intense and focused just south of the citadel. During these two days the marines killed 260 of the enemy while sustaining light losses. The marines continued to fight well throughout August as units

were rotated from the front line for rest and refitting.

(U) In defense of the citadel, the NVA also employed a rotation system. The 48B and 04B Regiments, 320B NVA Division, were the first units defending the city. In mid-August the 325th NVA Division elements began to be rotated in.

(C) During August the Airborne Division was deployed to protect the Marine Division's west flank and the Route 1 main supply route. The area of operations was bordered on the northwest by the Thach Han River, on the southeast generally along the Song Bo, and Route 1 formed the division's rear boundary. As the month began airborne elements effectively employed tactical air and artillery to engage the enemy at long range in the Hai Lang Forest. During the first four days of the month airborne artillery and tactical air reportedly destroyed 11 tanks, eight 105mm howitzers, three

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122mm artillery pieces, and two 130mm guns. Additionally, 11 tons of munitions were destroyed.

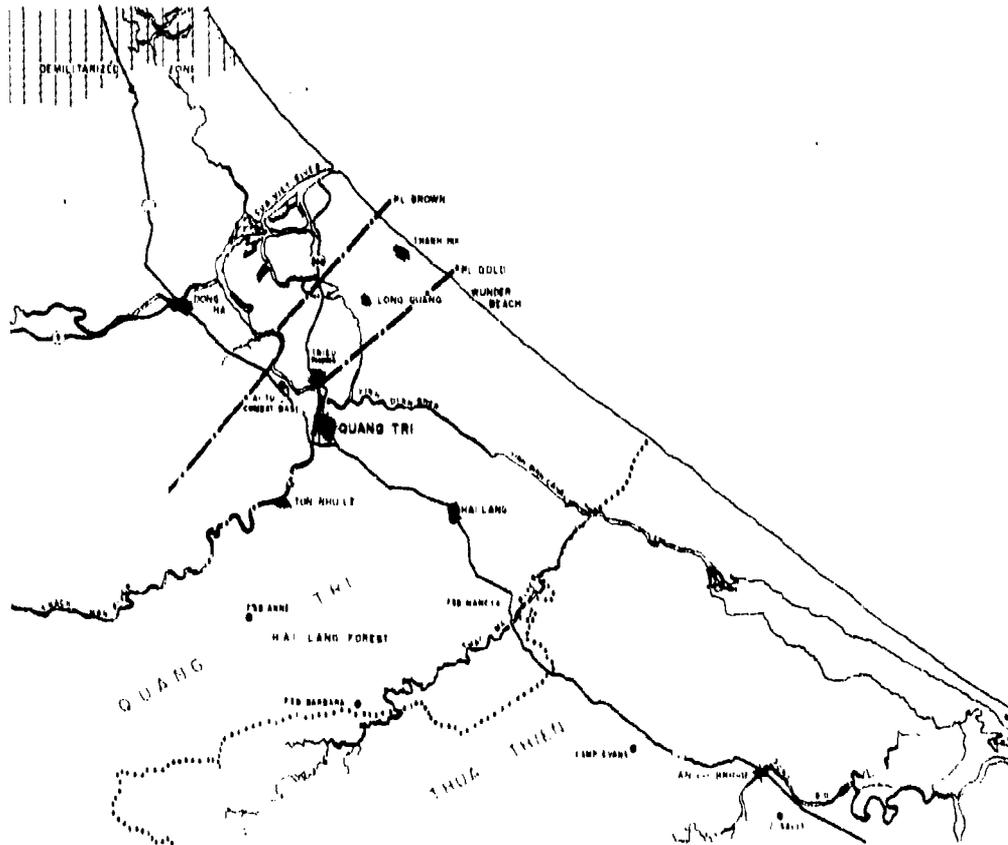
(C) On 6 August the enemy countered with light attacks-by-fire, striking an ammunition dump at Camp Evans, and destroyed 63 tons of ammunition, mostly 105mm rounds. Elements of the 304B Division launched a combined tank-infantry attack on 7 August against elements south of FSB Nancy. ARVN defenses held and the enemy withdrew. The following day a lighter attack was reported in the same area, and again the force was repulsed. The enemy lost nine tanks destroyed in the two-day engagement.

(C) On 11 August the 1st Ranger Group, under the operational control of the Airborne Division, began an operation to sweep the FSB Rakkasan area from the north (Fig. 3-3). The operation met light enemy resistance and no significant results were reported.

(C) The heaviest enemy pressure centered approximately ten kilometers south of Quang Tri City.

Intense fighting, usually of short duration, was reported as the enemy appeared to be attempting to interdict Route 1. As an example, on 19 August enemy armor appeared from the Hai Long Forest area moving toward the highway. Tactical air destroyed ten enemy tanks, and the TOW ground missile systems destroyed one. The following day 50 enemy bodies were found in the same area, presumably killed by the air strikes. Ground activity rose sharply on 27 August as enemy infantry and armor units (probably elements of the 308th Division and the 203d Tank Regiment) attacked airborne elements eight kilometers south of Quang Tri. Just west of the ground battle a South Vietnamese forward air controller directed artillery and air strikes against enemy troops in the open and reported 150 enemy killed. Light activity was reported the rest of the month in the Airborne Division area of operations.

(C) During the first week of September the Marine Division continued its attack on enemy units in Quang Tri City and along Phase Line Gold. The



Source: MACMH8

Figure: 3-2

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(C) During the marine fight for Quang Tri City the ranger defense along Phase Line Gold withstood daily enemy attacks. The defense was penetrated on one occasion, but the rangers successfully counterattacked, eliminating the penetration. Meanwhile, as anticipated, the 304B Division increased pressure from the Hai Lang Forest against the Airborne Division units, but a counterattack from that area did not materialize.

(C) Following the fall of Quang Tri City, activity decreased sharply as the marine elements eliminated small pockets of enemy resistance remaining in the city. Enemy attacks-by-fire also decreased and marine units were rotated to rear areas for rest, refitting and to receive replacements. Toward the end of the month enemy attacks-by-fire against the airborne elements increased as they continued their drive toward the east-southeast Thach Han River bank. On 30 September the division began an attack westward to seize FSB Anne, with Barbara a secondary objective. The attack into the northern Hai Lang Forest met well-organized positions, heavily defended by the 312th and 304B Divisions elements, supported by mortars and artillery. Progress was slow the first day of the attack, but the airborne soldiers continued to make progress.

(C) As October began, Marine Division elements conducted operations along Phase Line Gold and prepared for limited objective offensive operations four to five kilometers north to Phase Line Brown. Initially, the operations were planned to return the marine units to Phase Line Gold within two to five days. These plans changed later in the month when the marines were ordered to secure and hold Phase Line Brown.

(C) The first of a series of planned operations began on 7 October when a reinforced marine battalion attacked north along Route 560. The attack progressed 1.5 kilometers the first day, against moderate enemy resistance from the 27th and 31st Regiments, B-5 Front, and on 9 October, government forces occupied Trieu Phong District Headquarters where they remained for the rest of the month. Activity around Trieu Phong was moderate initially, but reduced to a low level by 15 October 1972. Tactical air and B-52 strikes were employed north and northwest of Quang Tri in support of the Vietnamese forces with numerous reports of weapons destroyed and secondary explosions. On 18 October marine reconnaissance teams briefly crossed the Thach Han River to observe activity in the Ai Tu combat base area in preparation for a planned attack. The reconnaissance teams reported light enemy activity, but by the end of the month the attack had not been launched.

(C) On 20 October a marine element launched a reconnaissance-in-force operation along the coast

toward Thanh Hoi, north of Phase Line Gold. The attacks met sporadic enemy resistance, primarily delaying actions. As these operations progressed, the Marine Division was directed to secure and hold Phase Line Brown. Positions near Long Quang were occupied on 24 October. Toward the end of the month heavy rains had inundated the lowlands, and the advance northward was almost at a standstill. A marked increase in enemy attacks-by-fire the last two days of the month indicated enemy knowledge of impending marine offensive operations as the NVA shifted the majority of its fire from the Airborne Division to the Marine Division area of operations.

(C) In the Airborne Division area south of Quang Tri City, the attack initiated on 30 September to seize Fire Support Bases Anne and Barbara met strong enemy resistance. The 209th Regiment, 312th Division, defensive positions along the south bank of the Thach Han River and in the Hai Lang Forest were well-organized and supported by accurate indirect fire. Enemy fire against the Airborne Division elements averaged from 500 to 700 rounds daily. Progress was slow during the first ten days of the operation; however, forward elements had reached positions four kilometers east of FSB Anne and two objectives had been secured along the Thach Han River against moderately heavy enemy resistance. Activity increased on 11 and 12 October as units advanced into enemy base areas and secured an objective two kilometers northeast of Anne. Also on 12 October, the 7th Ranger Group was placed under operational control of the Airborne Division with the mission of rear area security, allowing the division to commit more forces to the attack. The 1st Ranger Group remained the I Corps reserve and occupied positions on the Airborne Division flank. The 3d Airborne Brigade was tasked to disrupt enemy supply routes.

(C) By the middle of the month monsoon weather was limiting tactical air support to the Airborne Division, and progress was slowed. The 1st Airborne Brigade assumed defensive positions without reaching the Thach Han River bank. On 16 October activity increased sharply all along the western front as Airborne Division elements advanced against heavy enemy resistance from the 304th and 312th Divisions. Monsoon rains and increased enemy indirect fire attacks again slowed the momentum of the attack. Although little ground progress was made, the impact of the offensive on enemy operations was apparent. Artillery and antiaircraft weapons were captured in good condition, and body finds attested to the effectiveness of allied artillery and air strikes.

(C) On 25 October plans for the Airborne Division were altered, and the units were directed to

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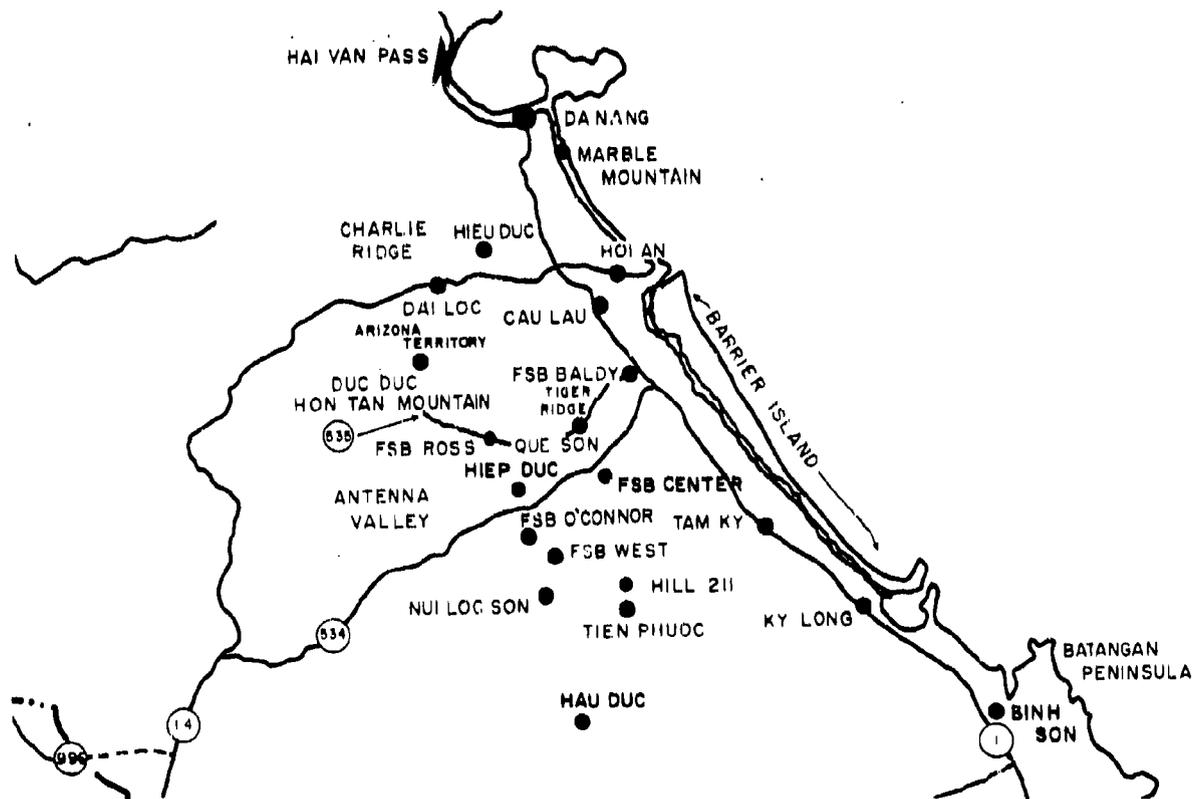
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bypass Anne and Barbara and attack to the rear of these positions to capture enemy materiel. Units on the south flank would then be in a position to attack the fire bases from the flank. The maneuver was successful and Barbara was reoccupied on 31 October against moderate resistance from the 9th Regiment, 304B Division. Although the base was reoccupied, friendly control of the surrounding area had not been clearly established as the month ended. Spurred by the 3d Airborne Brigade's success, the 2d Brigade's attack against FSB Anne gained momentum, but it had not been taken by 31 October.

(C) During the Quang Tri counteroffensive, activity continued in the other Military Region 1 provinces. During July the 1st Division remained responsible for the defense of the western and southwestern approaches to Hue in Thua Thien Province. Enemy activity continued to be centered around FSBs Bastogne and Checkmate, with constant pressure maintained in this area. Checkmate was lost, retaken, and finally evacuated because of the lack of cover and concealment within the base. The Checkmate area was then controlled by friendly forces occupying the high ground nearby. On 26

July 1st Division elements were forced to withdraw from Bastogne. However, the situation stabilized and LTG Truong was confident that the 1st Division could maintain control of the western approach to Hue. On 27 July the division was reinforced when LTG Truong assigned the 51st Regiment to operate in the area south of FSB Birmingham. The 1st Ranger Group was designated the Corps Reserve. Enemy artillery attacks were heavy in the 1st Division area during the period 22 to 29 July when over 10,000 rounds of fire were received in the vicinity of Bastogne, Checkmate, and Birmingham. On 8 July and again on 13 July the Phu Bai ammunition storage area received attacks-by-fire and a sapper attack (probably by the CT2 Sapper Battalion, 5th NVA Regiment) resulting in 2,850 rounds of artillery ammunition destroyed.

(C) Quang Nam Province reported light combat activity in early July. Activity increased in the Que Son area and in the vicinity of FSB Ross toward the end of July (Fig. 3-4). PW and agent reports indicated that the enemy was preparing to employ armor and 130mm artillery. On 23 July, 2d Division elements in the Que Son mountains killed



Source: MACMHB

Figure: 3-4

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70 enemy while losing 20 friendly killed. During the next week enemy units continued to threaten, as 2d Division elements killed 300 enemy while suffering friendly losses of 24 killed and 74 wounded. Enemy probes by the 711th Division elements continued against FSB Ross as the month ended. On 31 July, a joint 2d and 3d Division operation was planned for 1 August against enemy units located northwest of FSB Ross. 2d Division personnel completed TOW antitank missile training, and eight TOW systems were issued on 30 July. The priority for air and air cavalry support to units operating in the Que Son area was raised. Other contacts in Quang Nam Province were of little significance.

(C) In August the 1st Division maintained the defense of Hue by conducting offensive operations designed to keep enemy forces off balance and preempt offensive operations. As the month began, enemy pressure continued in the FSBs Bastogne - Checkmate area with daily enemy attacks by mortar, rocket, and artillery fires. On 2 August division forces reoccupied Bastogne against light enemy resistance. This event marked the beginning of offensive operations to retake Checkmate and expand the 1st Division area of control to the dominating west and southwestern terrain. Checkmate was reoccupied on 4 August following pre-emptive B-52 strikes. Enemy pressure continued against Bastogne and Checkmate with 400 to 600 rounds of artillery and mortar fire daily and numerous ground contacts. During the first ten days of August, 21 tons of munitions were captured and destroyed by 1st Division elements. By mid-month ground contacts were mostly friendly initiated and cost the enemy heavily in personnel and equipment. Tactical air and B-52 strikes also took a heavy toll. As an example, on 13 August 50 bodies were found in a B-52 strike zone, and 19 more were found the following day.

(C) 1st Division patrolling operations supported by tactical air and B-52 strikes gained in momentum and extended farther into enemy held territory. The 24th of August was particularly productive for the division as 115 enemy were killed and over 20 tons of munitions were destroyed. In order to support further penetrations into enemy defenses, I Corps artillery units displaced forward on 20 August and began a program of interdiction of enemy rear areas. The following day ARVN artillery struck an enemy ammunition dump 14 kilometers south-southwest of Bastogne, causing secondary explosions for almost three hours.

(C) As August ended 1st Division elements conducted coordinated attacks to take the high ground near Bastogne and Checkmate up to three kilometers from the bases, while the 57th Regiment continued operations south of FSB Anzio.

(C) Combat activity during August in Quang Nam Province focused on the Que Son Valley as the 711th NVA Division began operations to "liberate" the Quang Nam lowlands. As the month began the 3d Division continued to secure the Da Nang complex and protect lines of communication. The 2d Division conducted operations in the Que Son Valley and the Hon Tan mountain range to the northwest, also known as Tiger Ridge. During the first week of the month activity was at a low level; however, both the Da Nang and Marble Mountain airfields were hit with rocket attacks. The Da Nang attack on 3 August consisted of 16 122mm rockets fired by the 575th NVA Artillery Battalion and resulted in five killed (one American) and 21 wounded (20 Americans). The Marble Mountain attack on 6 August consisted of 20 rounds of 82mm mortar fire, wounding six, three of whom were Americans. On 8 August the 2d Regiment joined the 2d Division to conduct operations in the Que Son area. Three days later a captured soldier from the 270th Regiment, 711th NVA Division, led an element of the 2d Regiment to his unit seven kilometers northeast of Ross. The enemy was engaged and 42 were killed with no ARVN losses.

(C) Although regular ARVN forces were not heavily challenged during the first part of the month, Regional Forces were attacked by large enemy forces. For example, on 11 August Regional Forces nine kilometers southwest of Hoi An received a heavy ground attack, supported by mortar fire. The territorials quickly reinforced as American helicopter and Vietnamese gunships supported. The fighting lasted throughout the day, resulting in 93 enemy killed and 39 weapons captured. Regional Force losses were 22 killed, 32 wounded, and two 105mm howitzers destroyed. In addition, 25 civilians were wounded, and 80 houses burned. The city of Hoi An also received a light attack-by-fire which wounded nine Vietnamese civilians.

(C) Heavy fighting erupted with the 31st and 38th Regiments, 711th NVA Division, in the FSB Ross area on 18 August following indirect fire attacks the night before. Enemy forces attacked virtually all friendly positions in the Que Son area and interdicted Route 535 in several places. Da Nang AB was also struck with 43 rounds of 122mm rockets, resulting in one American killed, 20 Americans wounded, seven Vietnamese civilians killed and 27 wounded; 11 aircraft were destroyed or heavily damaged. Pressure continued throughout the day against Ross and Que Son District headquarters as the enemy assaulted in small units and "hugged" closely to friendly forces, hindering the use of airpower. Ross and Que Son were evacuated late on 18 August, and 2d Division elements formed

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a defensive line midway between Que Son and FSB Baldy.

(C) By 20 August the situation had stabilized with casualties for the two days reported as 180 enemy killed, 31 ARVN killed and 195 wounded, mostly from the 5th Regiment. An unknown number were missing, and many major items of equipment were abandoned during the withdrawal. By 21 August the 2d Division had repositioned forces and counterattacked to retake Que Son District headquarters and FSB Ross. The attack was launched with one regiment, reinforced, along Tiger Ridge on the north, and one regiment along Route 535 in the center. On 24 August the 4th Regiment joined the 2d Division, and two days later it attacked along Route 535 with the objective of securing Ross.

(C) On 24 August BG Phan Hoa Hiep was replaced by COL Tran Van Nhut as commander of the 2d ARVN Division. Late the next day the 60th Ranger Border Defense Battalion reclaimed the Que Son District Headquarters, although enemy strong points were reported still inside the compound. Some of the howitzers abandoned during the withdrawal were recaptured in unserviceable condition. Enemy forces opposing the southern axis of advance took heavy losses, as tactical air and B-52 strikes supported the 4th Regiment. As the month ended the 2d Division launched a coordinated attack against Que Son and FSB Ross. The enemy elements of the 270th Regiment, 711th Division were driven from Que Son except for a small pocket on the northwest edge of the town, but the 4th Regiment had not yet retaken Ross.

(C) Activity remained light in the southernmost provinces of Quang Tin and Quang Ngai during August, but there was an increase over the preceding month. Enemy activity was in the form of light harassing attacks-by-fire, terrorist incidents, ground attacks against outposts, and sapper attacks. Territorial Forces reacted well to each situation and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. For example, the enemy attacked three villages southwest of Binh Son in Quang Ngai Province before dawn on 8 August. By the middle of the morning sector forces had blocked the land exits from the area, and the Vietnamese Navy was screening the waterways. American helicopters and VNAF gunships supported the operation. Regional Forces losses were 24 killed and 59 wounded, while the enemy lost 68 killed.

(C) Toward the end of the month Territorial Forces conducted operations to clear Barrier Island southeast of Hoi An. During the operation, 116 enemy were killed while Regional Forces losses were 18 killed and 35 wounded. Approximately 750 houses were burned by enemy forces withdrawing before the territorial sweep. On 31 August enemy

sappers from the 91st Sapper Battalion attacked the Route 1 bridge at Cau Lau, dropping one span. The bridge was repaired and traffic was moving the following day.

(C) The 1st Division conducted search and destroy operations south and southwest of FSBs Bastogne and Checkmate in Thua Thien Province during September, targeted against logistics complexes of the 324B Division. These operations, supported by B-52 strikes and ARVN artillery, met light resistance initially, but enemy defenses stiffened as the ARVN forces probed deeper into his base area. Enemy fire against the attacking forces was light to moderate and caused light casualties, as the 1st Division expanded its area of control by establishing platoon and company strongpoints in dominating terrain features. During the first half of the month, approximately 85 tons of munitions were captured. The search operations were interrupted on 19 September to adjust regimental boundaries, as a result of the 57th Regiment's departure to join the 2d Division in the Que Son Valley operation. The 51st Regiment replaced the 57th Regiment in the area of operation south and southeast of Hue with the mission of maintaining the security of Route 1 between the Hai Van Pass and Hue.

(C) On 19 September the 1st Regiment secured FSB Veghel and continued operations to occupy the high ground around the base—designed to extend control of the Route 547 complex further southwest. By 23 September activity had reached the lowest level since the operation began in August to extend control outward from Bastogne and Checkmate.

(C) Toward the end of the month, in response to increased activity by the 582d NVA Battalion in the Hai Van Pass area, the 51st Regiment conducted operations in Phu Loc District. Although these operations did not result in significant engagements, enemy interdiction of Route 1 was reduced. Meanwhile, the two regiments in the Veghel area continued to discover small caches of enemy supplies as they expanded control further south and southwest.

(C) In Quang Nam Province on 1 September, 2d Division elements continued house-to-house fighting inside Que Son District Town after the occupation of the district headquarters on 31 August. The town was completely retaken on 1 September against moderate resistance from the 13th Regiment, 711th Division. The 4th Regiment continued its attack south of the town toward FSB Ross, and by 8 September it had occupied the southern part of the base. Meanwhile 2d Regiment troops attacked southwest to secure Nui Loc Son and cut the enemy supply lines in the Hiep Duc Valley. This objective was occupied on 6 September and the 2d Regiment continued the attack to seize FSB West.

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(C) By 9 September Ross had been secured, and the major items of equipment previously abandoned were recaptured in an unserviceable condition. Activity decreased sharply in the Que Son area, probably as a result of increased activity at Tien Phuoc in Quang Tin Province by the 38th Regiment, 711th Division and the 5th Sapper Battalion. On 14 September the 3d Division assumed responsibility for operations in the Que Son Valley, locating its forward command post at FSB Baldy. Operational control of the 5th Regiment passed to the 3d Division, giving it the 2d, 5th, 57th, and 58th Regiments. The 2d Division retained the 4th and 6th Regiments.

(U) Activity, mostly enemy initiated, increased sharply on 18 September in the coastal lowlands of the province, and consisted of light attacks-by-fire, sapper attacks, and terrorist incidents. The Da Nang Air Base was hit on 23 September with 33 122mm rockets, wounding three US Navy personnel and causing minor structural and aircraft damage. Rockets which landed off the base killed or wounded nine Vietnamese. Activity was at a low level throughout the province for the rest of the month.

(C) In September the level of enemy activity that had been experienced in the north struck the southern areas of Military Region 1. As the North Vietnamese realized that an assault on Hue through the 1st Division had failed and that Quang Tri City would soon fall to the South Vietnamese, they turned their attention to the relatively peaceful provinces in the south to relieve the RVNAF pressure against Quang Tri. Combat activity in Quang Tin Province was the highest since the invasion began on 30 March. On 3 September enemy forces of the 38th Regiment, 711th Division attacked villages and Regional Force outposts in the vicinity of Tien Phuoc. Territorial Forces were deployed to the area, but by 6 September the town was seriously threatened with the fall of Hill 211. Attempted air assaults onto the hill were diverted because of the heavy enemy ground fire. A ground attack by elements of the 38th Regiment and 5th NVA Sapper Regiment, supported by heavy artillery and tanks of the 572d Artillery-Tank Regiment, was successful, and Tien Phuoc fell to the enemy on 9 September. The ARVN initially retained outposts southeast of the town, but enemy heavy artillery, used for the first time in the province, forced evacuation of the outposts.

(C) The 2d Division assumed responsibility for the Tien Phuoc area of operations on 12 September. Fighting continued around Tien Phuoc with heavy casualties on both sides. For the next few days, ARVN forces consolidated defensive positions and realigned forces for a counterattack. The counterattack was delayed initially by Hurricane Flossie,

then later by the upsurge in enemy activity in Quang Ngai Province. Although enemy activity increased in the Quang Tin provincial lowlands, ARVN forces made limited progress toward retaking the high ground around Tien Phuoc. The 4th and 6th Regiments attacked toward the town against light enemy resistance on two separate approaches.

(C) On 24 September the 4th Regiment began an operation to retake Hill 211, the key terrain feature in the Tien Phuoc area, but made little progress. As friendly units maneuvered around the town, enemy resistance stiffened, primarily with attacks-by-fire of mortar and 180mm artillery. Enemy activity also increased in the lowlands. The plans to retake Tien Phuoc were again interrupted by a shift of division boundaries, which gave the 3d Division responsibility for Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces and the 2d Division, Quang Ngai Province. This resulted in the withdrawal of one battalion of the 4th Regiment from the Tien Phuoc operation before Hill 211 was recaptured.

(C) On 29 September the 3d Division finalized plans to retake Tien Phuoc. The 6th Regiment was to seize the key terrain west and south of the town and elements of the 2d and 4th Regiments were to conduct air assaults to the northwest of the district capital and cut enemy supply lines. The operation was expected to begin on 1 October and to last about 10 days.

(C) Most of the activity in Quang Ngai Province during September was enemy initiated (Fig. 3-5). At the first of the month Regional Force elements conducted operations throughout the lowlands and reported several sharp engagements. As an example, on 2 September the 103d Regional Force Battalion killed 50 enemy north of Mo Duc with light losses. Ranger border defense battalions at Ba To and Gia Vue patrolled outward from their base camps, making sporadic contacts with the 52d Regiment, 320th Division. During the first half of the month sporadic attacks-by-fire, usually less than ten rounds, were employed by enemy forces against district towns, outposts and operating bases, but these caused little damage. An exception to this was a 30-round mortar attack against Mo Duc on 15 September, which marked the beginning of the 2d NVA Division offensive in Quang Ngai Province.

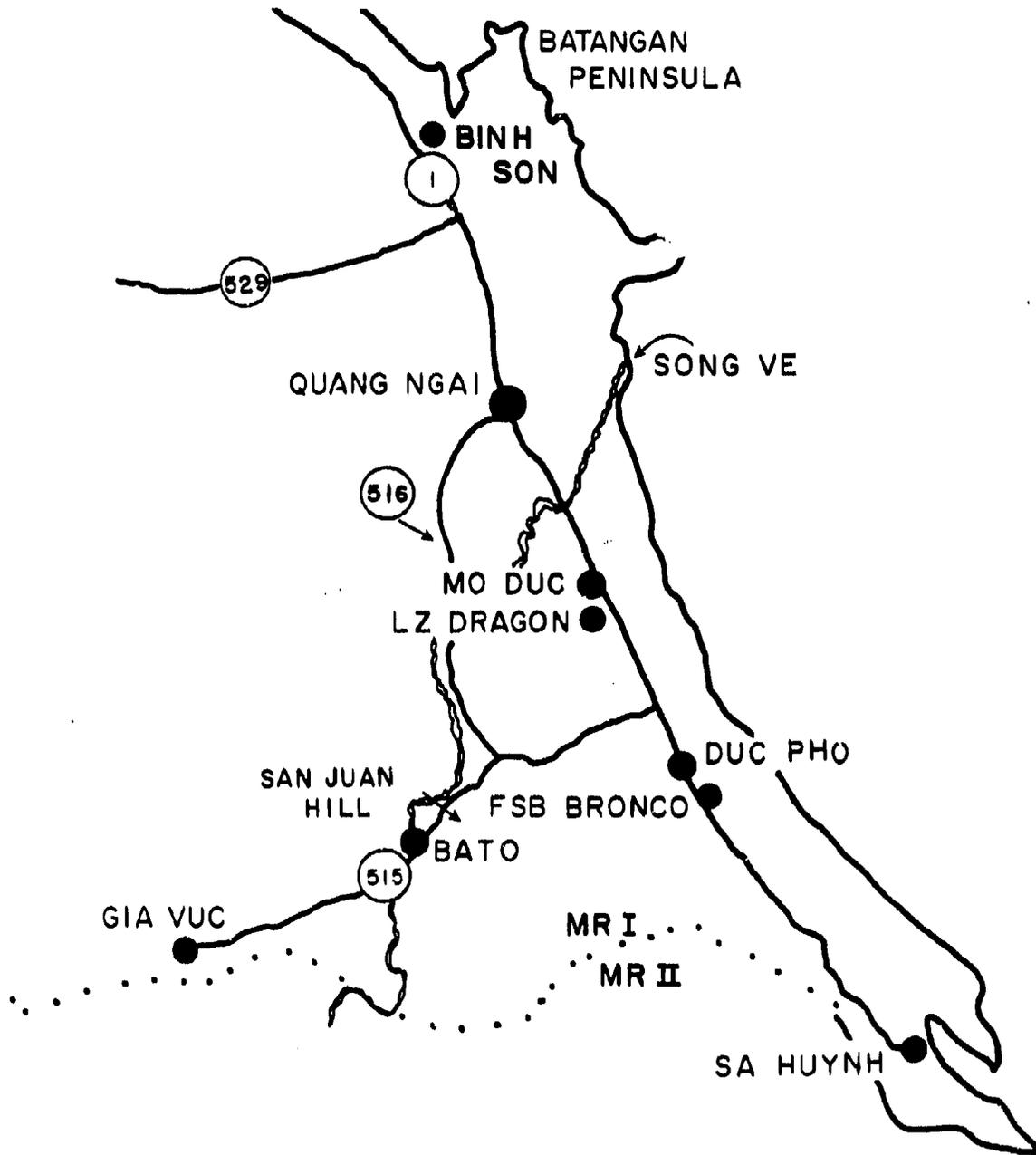
(C) On 16 September Mo Duc District headquarters came under heavy pressure from the 1st Regiment, 2d NVA Division, with mortar and rocket attacks, followed by ground attacks. An American advisor was among the killed. Over 100 enemy were killed, and the defense held. Territorial reinforcements from the north encountered an enemy roadblock near the Song Ve bridge and did not reach Mo Duc. Landing Zone Dragon, just south of

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 3-5

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the town, fell into enemy hands by late afternoon. The following day enemy pressure increased at Mo Duc and began at Duc Pho from the 141st Regiment, 2d Division, and Ba To from the 52d Regiment. Bridges along Highway 1 were blown, and the enemy strongpoint near the Song Ve remained. American and VNAF gunships supported the defenders and were credited with inflicting heavy casualties as bad weather hampered tactical air operations. The following day the Sa Huynh District Town received a heavy day-long attack, but the defense held. The 2d Division began preparations to deploy Regular Forces to southern Quang Ngai Province, as it appeared that a major effort would be required there.

(C) Heavy fighting continued at Mo Duc, Duc Pho, and Ba To until 21 September, when enemy pressure began to subside. For the period 18 through 20 September government forces, with American tactical air, naval gunfire, and gunship support, accounted for over 600 enemy killed in Quang Ngai Province. Vietnamese casualties were 70 killed and 232 wounded. Although the situation in the province was serious, it had stabilized as small scale reinforcements and resupplies reached Ba To, Mo Duc, and Duc Pho. The enemy then attacked numerous outposts throughout the province on 22 September, particularly along Routes 1 and 515, and increased pressure against Duc Pho on 24 September by gaining control of Landing Zone Bronco. Also reported in the lowlands were numerous acts of terrorism in various villages and hamlets.

(C) The situation resembled a stalemate at the three district towns and along Route 1 for several days; however, American tactical air, naval gunfire, and B-52 strikes were continually hitting enemy positions as ARVN ground troops maneuvered to locate and engage the enemy. The 2d Ranger Group from Military 2 arrived in Quang Ngai on 26 September and was immediately air assaulted into the Duc Pho area. Additional ranger units were deployed to the Ba To area, and 2d Division elements moved to Mo Duc and began expanding the areas of control. Enemy forces continued to launch attacks-by-fire against the towns, but ground attacks declined in intensity.

(C) By the end of September 2d Division elements were on the offensive. Activity around Duc Pho had decreased to a low level and ranger units were progressing northward along Route 1 against light resistance. Elements of the 5th Regiment and a ranger border defense battalion were moving north along Route 1 from Mo Duc, encountering strong resistance near the Song Ve bridge. At Ba To the three battalions, under control of the 11th Ranger Group headquarters, were continually un-

der pressure from the 52d Regiment; however, the rangers were steadily progressing toward taking the dominant terrain around the base camp and the district headquarters compound.

(C) In Quang Tin Province two battalions of the 3d Division conducted a combat assault north of Tien Phuoc District Town on 30 September. On 7 October elements of the 6th and 56th Regiments recaptured Tien Phuoc. The enemy suffered heavy losses in his defense of the town. The attack on Tien Phuoc was the first truly offensive operation undertaken by the 3d Division since its retreat from Quang Tri. For the remainder of the month operations were conducted to clear the enemy from the surrounding terrain and return the area to government control.

(C) Activity during the first part of October in Quang Ngai Province consisted of resupply operations at Mo Duc, Duc Pho, and Ba To. The enemy still controlled Landing Zone Dragon, one kilometer south of Mo Duc. This terrain feature dominated the town of Mo Duc, and its recapture was essential to securing the area. Elements of the 4th Regiment were employed in the Mo Duc area, the 5th Regiment and 11th Ranger Group at Ba To, and the 2d Ranger Group at Duc Pho.

(C) On 5 October three AT-3 missiles hit the fire support base northwest of Ba To, destroying the only two 105mm howitzers in that area. Because of poor weather and the loss of the howitzers, the Ba To situation was critical; however, on 8 October the howitzers were replaced and friendly elements began to clear the area of enemy forces. On the same day elements of the 4th Regiment retook Landing Zone Dragon south of Mo Duc and consolidated positions there. On 13 October elements of the 5th Regiment and the 11th Ranger Group moved from northwest of Ba To to San Juan Hill on the northeast. Elements of the 5th Regiment were positioned near the intersection of Routes 515 and 516 to interdict enemy movement there. Elements of the 11th Ranger Group operated west and south of San Juan Hill. The units in the Ba To area met light enemy resistance until 15 October when elements of the 5th Regiment's defensive position were overrun. After regrouping, the 5th conducted local security operations east of Ba To. On 30 October the Ba To ranger camp received heavy attacks-by-fire, followed by ground attacks by elements of the 52d Regiment. The 69th Ranger Border Defense Battalion was forced to withdraw from the camp and Ba To was lost to the enemy.

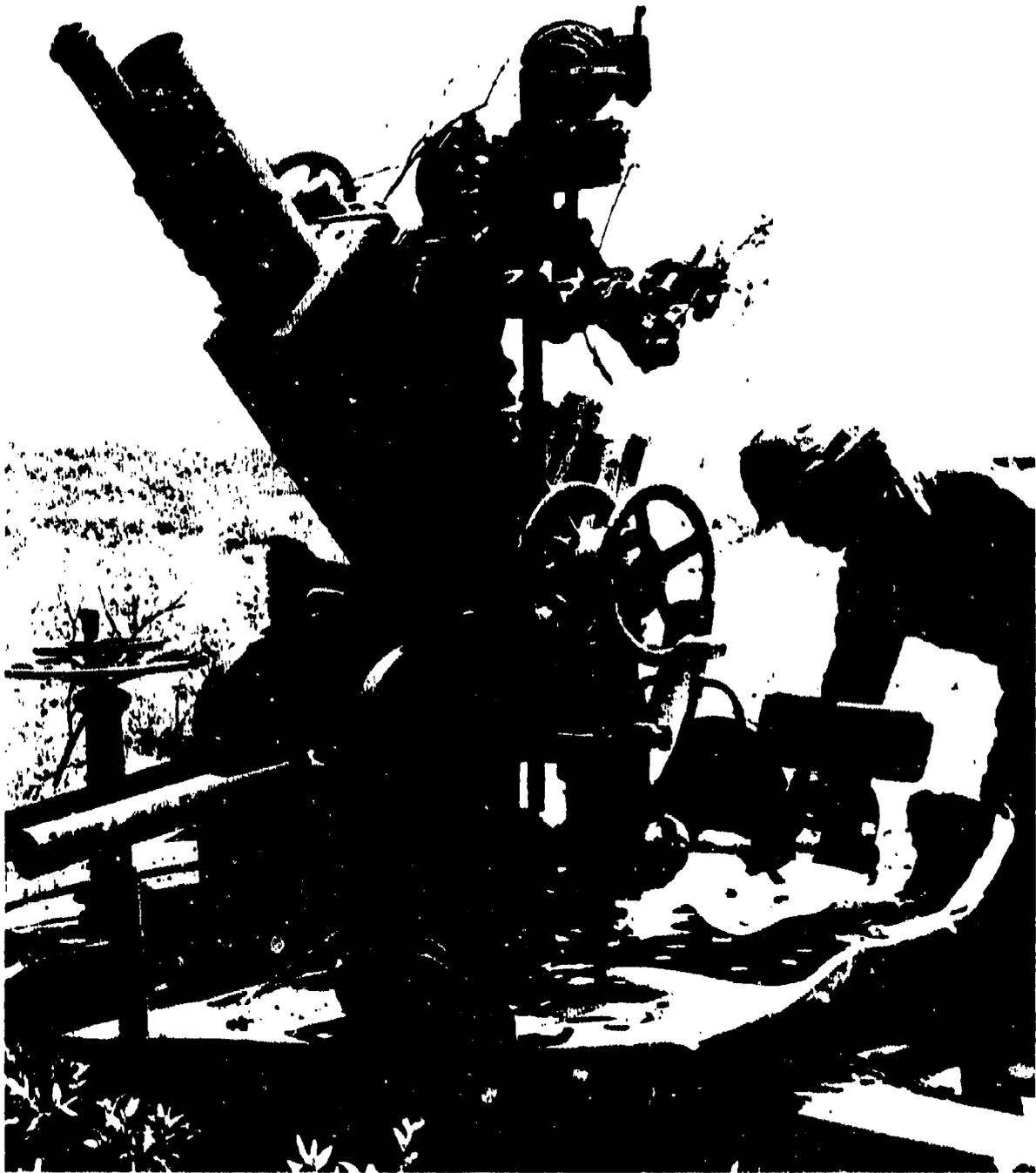
(C) The 2d Ranger Group operation in the vicinity of Duc Pho was aimed at clearing Route 1 north of Duc Pho and linking up with elements of the 4th Regiment moving south from Mo Duc. After two weeks of meeting moderate to heavy enemy resis-

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A captured NVA weapon in Military Region 1.

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tance, Route 1 was opened between Mo Duc and Duc Pho on 21 October.

(C) On 28 October the 1st Ranger Group, previously under the operational control of the Airborne Division, commenced operations in the Binh Son and Son Tinh Districts of northern Quang Ngai Province.

(C) In Thua Thien Province during October the 1st Division conducted search and destroy operations along Route 547 southwest of FSB Bastogne and prepared for monsoon weather. 1st Division operations in the vicinity of FSB Veghel uncovered numerous caches of enemy munitions and supplies as well as enemy casualties killed by air and artillery. For example, 1,400 rounds of mortar ammunition, plus other supplies, were found south of Veghel on 1 October. The 1st and 54th Regiments engaged elements of the 324B NVA Division in daily contacts with highly favorable results for the South Vietnamese.

(C) Government control was expanding along the southwest approaches to Hue by positioning company or platoon-size units of the 1st Division on dominating terrain; patrol and search operations were then conducted outward from these positions. As the search operations continued, the damage to enemy forces by B-52 strikes and ARVN artillery became apparent. As an example, on 8 October an abandoned hospital complex was discovered with 78 new graves nearby. Approximately 200 rounds of 122mm ammunition were also found. As the mon-

soon season neared, 1st Division elements began preparing to occupy and operate along a line generally from FSB Bastogne southeast to the Hai Van Pass. The 51st Regiment was committed southeast of Hue during the month and conducted operations against the 5th and 8th NVA Regiments of the MRTTH.

(C) In the Que Son Valley, Quang Nam Province, during October 3d Division elements expanded their control over the valley complex. Only light scattered contacts and light attacks-by-fires were reported until 30 October, when the old district headquarters southeast of the new resettlement area was attacked by an unknown size force from the 31st Regiment, 711th Division. Territorial Forces were forced to withdraw from the old headquarters complex.

(C) Combat activity in other parts of the province consisted mostly of Territorial Forces contacts with small enemy elements along the populated lowlands. On 4 October an unknown size enemy force (probably the 70th NVA Battalion and a Quang Nam VC Provincial unit) attacked two small villages on Barrier Island. Many of the villagers were abducted by the enemy the next day. Territorial Forces combat assaulted into the area and returned the villagers to government control. The Da Nang Air Base was hit on 25 and 28 September by 122mm rockets. Casualties and damage were light, with two killed (1 American and 1 Vietnamese civilian) and 10 wounded (nine Americans and one Vietnamese).



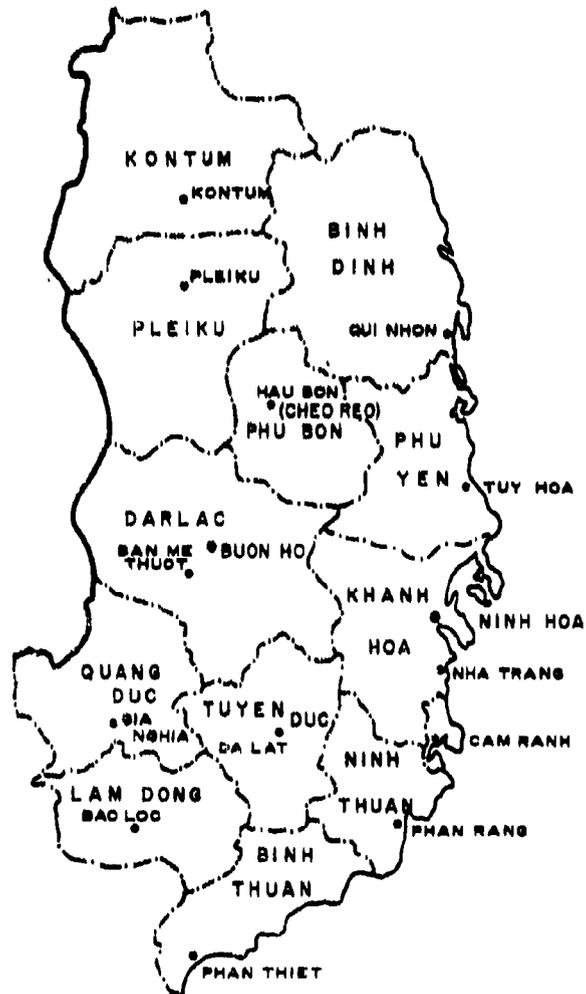
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MILITARY REGION 2



Source: MACDI

Figure: 3-6

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MILITARY REGION 2

(C) In July the low level of enemy initiated activity in the II Corps area continued (Fig. 3-6). In Kontum Province combat activity was light as 23d Division units continued to operate northwest and north of the city. Only one significant contact occurred during the month; on 2 July elements of the 46th Regiment became engaged for two days with an enemy unit 15 kilometers northwest of Kontum City. After suffering heavy casualties the enemy withdrew and only sporadic, scattered small contacts occurred the remainder of the month. On 19 July the 45th Regiment and territorial units assumed responsibility for the Kontum Pass area, releasing the 8th Ranger Group for offensive operations in Binh Dinh Province (Fig. 3-7). The II Corps Commander directed the 23d Division to organize a mobile operation to destroy enemy forces north of Kontum City to a line running east and west in the vicinity of Vo Dinh. This operation did not take place during the month. In addition, he directed the maximum use of Territorial Forces to maintain security and discipline in the city, releasing ARVN units to train and rest. The division rotated two battalions at a time to their home bases for this purpose. A US and ARVN mobile training team was dispatched to Kontum to assist in retraining the division units as replacement personnel and equipment were received. The regiments of the division were reorganized with three battalions per regiment instead of four, a reorganization that had been planned for several months, but was delayed by the enemy offensive.

(C) In Pleiku Province, following the opening of Route 14 from Pleiku to Kontum on 30 June, combat activity was light. The highway was opened to civilian traffic on 6 July. Sporadic harassment and interdiction continued in the form of minor attacks-by-fire north of Pleiku and south of the pass, but the road remained open during the entire month.

(C) In Binh Dinh Province, on 1 July, the Korean Cavalry Regiment assumed the security responsibility for Route 10 from the An Khe Pass to the Mang Giang Pass, releasing the 47th Regiment for deployment to northern Binh Dinh Province. The 47th assumed the mission of the 40th Regiment north of Phu My, allowing the 40th to return to Ba Gi for badly needed training. By mid-July all elements of the 22d Division were located in Binh Dinh Province in preparation for a counteroffensive to retake the three northern districts. To provide additional forces for the operation, the 2d and 8th Ranger Groups and the 19th Armored Cavalry Squadron were deployed to the area from Pleiku. On 19 July, the first phase of a three phase Operation BAC BINH VUONG 22/8 began. Preceded by B-52, tactical air, and naval gunfire preparations,

elements of the 40th Regiment air assaulted into landing zones along the high ground at the Bong Son Pass overlooking Route 1. The remainder of the regiment and the 19th Cavalry attacked through the pass along the highway. By the evening of 20 July ARVN units pushed through and secured the pass against light resistance. On 21 July the second phase of the operation began. Artillery, tactical air, and naval gunfire preparations were fired in support of battalion air assaults into each of the three landing zones: B-11, B-21, and B-22. Two battalions of the 41st Regiment attacked north across the Lai Giang River, near Hoai Nhon, linking up with the battalion at B-11 and raising the South Vietnamese flag over Hoai Nhon on 21 July. The 42d Regiment elements in the vicinity of Landing Zones B-21 and B-22 consolidated and screened their areas with only light contact. Small encounters and minor attacks-by-fire were the only resistance and 22d Division elements reoccupied Landing Zone English on 23 July. The third phase of the operation began on 24 July. The 2d Ranger Group was airlifted to the vicinity of Tam Quan District Town, which was reoccupied by noon on the 24th. Activity was light the remainder of the month as ARVN forces consolidated their positions and conducted clearing operations. On 28 July elements of the 8th Ranger Group air assaulted in the vicinity of Hoai An and secured the town by mid-afternoon.

(C) During August combat activity was at a low level in Kontum Province. On 5 and 7 August significant contacts were reported northwest of Kontum City, resulting in 57 enemy killed, ARVN casualties were four dead and 19 wounded. The remainder of the month was characterized by scattered attacks-by-fire and light ground contacts.

(C) Activity in the northern portion of Pleiku Province in August consisted of numerous wide-spread harassing attacks-by-fire, interdiction of lines of communications, and contacts with small enemy elements along Route 14 north of Pleiku. During the first ten days of the month enemy activity increased in west central Pleiku Province. To counter this activity and the threat to Thanh An, II Corps directed the 23d Division to assume operational control of all Territorial Forces located in Kontum, Pleiku, and Darlac Provinces, effective 14 August. These three provinces were referred to as "Military Region 2 West." The command included all Territorial Forces normally under the command of the province chiefs, the organic units of the 23d Division, and Task Force 21 of the II Corps Ranger Command.

(C) Task Force 21, with the 72d, 80th, and 80th Ranger Border Defense Battalions, were employed in the Kontum Pass area, releasing the 46th Regi-

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A VNAF A-1E conducts an air strike in Kontum Province.

ment to conduct operations southwest of Pleiku City. The 23d Division Commander, BG Ly Tong Ba, established the following command posts: the main CP at Kontum, controlling operations in Kontum Province; the forward CP under the Assistant Division Commander in Pleiku, controlling Pleiku Province operations; and the rear CP at Ban Me Thout under the division Chief of Staff, controlling Darlac Province operations.

(C) On 17 August the 45th Regiment began a search operation west-southwest of Pleiku City. Objectives of the operation were to clear both sides of Highway L-509 west from Pleiku for approximately 20 kilometers, then swing southwest and south toward Thanh An to clear and destroy the enemy in the zone. The first significant contact was made on 24 August, seven kilometers west-northwest of Thanh An. BG Ba then revised his plans in an effort to preempt an expected enemy attack against Thanh An. Instead of continuing

operations to the west along Route 19 with an entire regiment, two of the battalions were employed in areas of operations to the south and southeast of the district capital. US air cavalry screened to the west and south. Little contact was made for the remainder of the month.

(C) Combat activity in northeastern Binh Dinh Province during the month was characterized by sharp, short duration, small unit contacts; scattered attacks-by-fire; and ground probes against ARVN and Regional Force units along Route 1. The 22d Division conducted multi-battalion operations throughout the month, capitalizing on its mobility and firepower advantage to keep the enemy off balance. On 10 August units of the division began an operation to regain additional territory. For two days, a two regiment task force moved west into lower An Lao River Valley. A battalion conducted an air assault onto the high ground northwest of Hoai Nhon, while a regimental-sized force attacked

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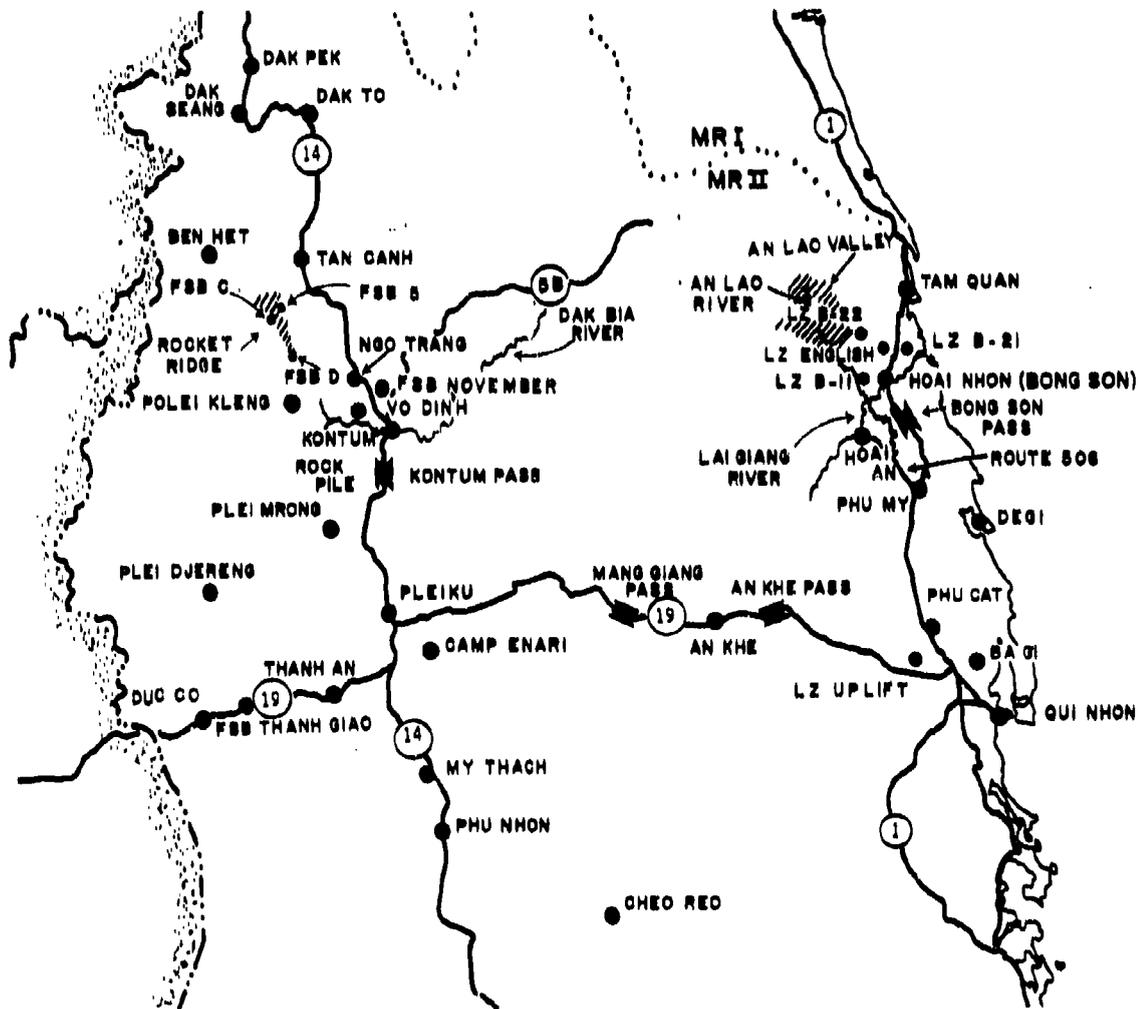
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westward along the An Lao River. During the operation numerous light enemy contacts and sightings of small groups of enemy soldiers leaving the area were reported. On 17 August the division began a four day, multi-battalion, ground and air assault west of Tam Quan, supported by B-52 strikes. During the operation ARVN forces reported 88 enemy killed. ARVN casualties were one dead and one wounded. On 23 August a two regiment size operation was initiated six kilometers southeast of Hoai An with the objective of destroying enemy forces located along Highway 506. The most significant contact occurred on 26 August, six kilometers southeast of Hoai Nhon. Forty-four enemy were reported killed, while ARVN casualties were one killed and 18 wounded. As August ended there

were two regimental operations underway. The 42d Regiment was continuing to drive west along the high ground five kilometers south-southeast of Hoai An. The 41st Regiment was operating on the high ground five kilometers east of Landing Zone Uplift.

(C) During September combat activity remained at a low level in Kontum Province. The only significant contacts occurred northwest of Kontum City during the period 5 to 7 September. These contacts resulted in 124 enemy killed, while ARVN casualties were 19 killed and 39 wounded.

(C) In Pleiku Province activity was concentrated in the west-central portion of the province. On 4 September the Plei Djereng Ranger Border Camp fell to the enemy and activity shifted to the Thanh



Source: MACMH

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ARVN artillerymen fire a 105mm round in Kontum Province.

An area. Numerous daily contacts occurred in this area for the next ten days as 23d Division units and ranger border defense battalions continued operations to secure Thanh An and the lines of communications. Light contacts and attacks-by-fire occurred as ARVN units continued clearing operations near Thanh An, Duc Co, and Plei Djereng. On 20 September the rangers reoccupied Plei Djereng unopposed. Activity in the northern portion of the province consisted of numerous widespread harassing attacks-by-fire, interdictions of Route 14 north of Pleiku, and light contacts with small enemy elements.

(C) In Binh Dinh Province combat activity was centered in the coastal plain region during the month and was characterized by small unit contacts and scattered attacks-by-fire against ARVN and Regional Force units along Route 1. The 22d Division continued to conduct multi-battalion operations throughout the month, capitalizing on its mobility and firepower advantage. During the first week of the month, the 42d Regiment continued its operation south-southeast of Hoai An. At the same time,

the 41st Regiment was operating on the high ground to the east of Landing Zone Uplift. These operations were followed by the 2d Ranger Group and 40th Regiment search operations west and north-west of Tam Quan. On 19 September, a sweep was conducted into the An Lao Valley in the vicinity of Hoai An. To the south on 25 September, an operation began in the Suoi Ca Valley, west-southwest of Phu My. These operations during the month did not produce any significant contacts.

(C) During October combat activity in Kontum Province remained at a low level except for a few short, but sharp, clashes. On 5 October ten kilometers north-northwest of Kontum City, fighting erupted involving elements of the 44th Regiment of the 23d Division. The fighting lasted for three days. In this battle, the South Vietnamese troops accounted for over 250 of the enemy killed. Government casualties were reported as 40 dead and 172 wounded. On 12 October, the Ben Het Ranger Border Camp came under heavy attacks-by-fire followed by a ground attack. American and Vietnamese tactical air and gunships supported the

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camp defenders and one B-52 strike was diverted into the area. However, communications were lost with the camp at 2315 hours when the 95th Ranger Border Defense Battalion evacuated the camp. The rangers continued to make their way to friendly lines as the month ended. On 29 October Dak Seang received an attack of approximately 1,000 rounds of mixed artillery and mortar fire followed by a ground attack by elements of the 66th NVA Regiment. The 337 camp defenders were supported by American and Vietnamese tactical air strikes. The camp was evacuated after darkness. As the month ended, contact had been established with two groups of the rangers between Dak Seang and Dak Pek. On 30 October two reconnaissance companies of the 23d Division combat assaulted into landing zones in the vicinity of Dak To and Tan Canh. The mission of these units was to raise the South Vietnamese flag over these district headquarters and to remain there for at least five days. Only light, ineffective attacks-by-fire were reported by the units. In two sharp contacts on 31 October, 62 enemy were reported killed, while ARVN casualties were light.

(C) In Pleiku Province the security of Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum Cities continued to occupy ARVN forces as the enemy harassed traffic in the Kontum Pass area. During the evening of 19 October a culvert 12 kilometers south of Kontum was blown, effectively closing the road. Enemy action prevented repair work and on 22 October a bridge in the Kontum Pass area was destroyed. The 23d Division moved additional troops into the area to secure the engineer units performing repairs. Reports indicated that the enemy suffered heavy casualties; however, activity in the pass area delayed repair work, and the highway remained closed. In southern Pleiku Province activity was light the first half of the month. On 20 October the enemy increased pressure against the villages and Territorial Forces in the vicinity of My Thach, interdicting Route 14 to the south of Pleiku. 23d Division units were deployed to clear the pockets of enemy resistance. Several sharp contacts were reported, but by 24 October Territorial Forces from Phu Nhon had linked-up with 23d Division elements

placing Route 14 south of Pleiku under friendly control.

(C) In Phu Bon Province where activity previously had been negligible, one significant contact between Viet Cong local forces and territorial units on 18 October was reported. Territorial Forces, reacting to intelligence that the enemy planned to attack a hamlet ten kilometers northwest of Chen Reo, set up claymore mines, manned defensive positions, and preplanned artillery fire and tactical air on the approach and egress routes into the area. During the initial ground encounter 100 enemy were killed, while the territorials sustained one wounded. As the enemy force withdrew, tactical air and artillery were placed along withdrawal routes and 57 additional enemy were killed.

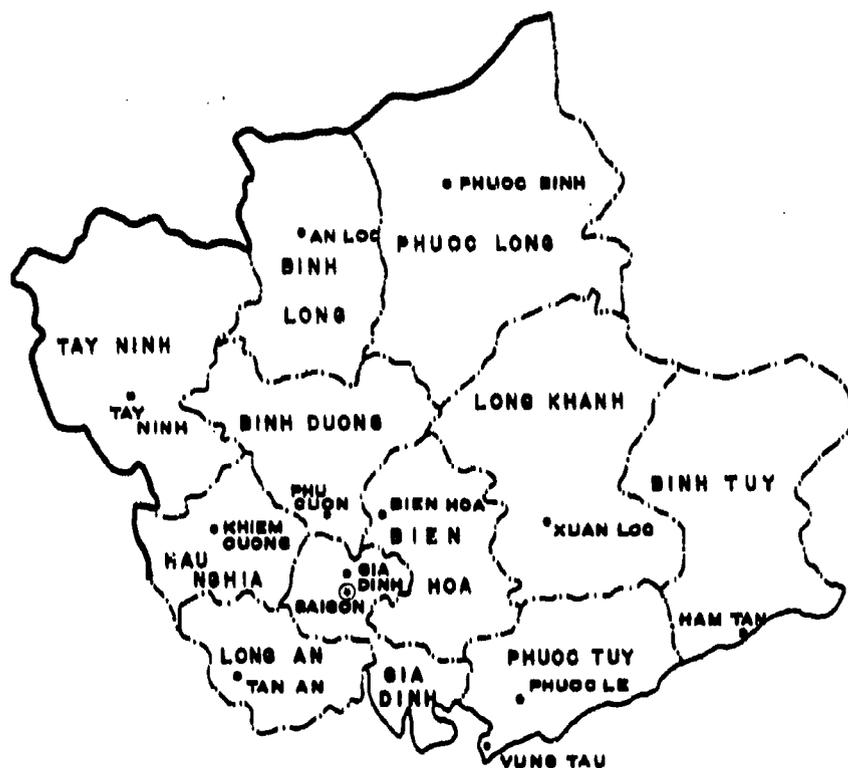
(C) In Binh Dinh Province no significant contacts were reported during the month as 22d Division and territorial units continued offensive operations in northern Binh Dinh. On 10 October Phase I of the 22d Division counteroffensive that began in July terminated, and Phase II was initiated. In addition to regaining lost territory during Phase I, the South Vietnamese reported 2,653 enemy killed, 258 RVNAF returnees, and 10,306 civilians returned to government control. Friendly casualties were reported as 470 killed, 1,662 wounded, and two missing. In Phase II there was a new alignment of the Binh Dinh battlefield boundaries. The sector headquarters, with operational control of Territorial Forces and two ARVN regiments, was given responsibility for the eastern portion of the province, generally from a line four kilometers west of Route 1 to the coast, stretching from Phu Cat to Tam Quan. The sector mission was to destroy the enemy provincial units, eliminate the Viet Cong infrastructure in the villages, reestablish government control throughout the hamlet, village and district organizations, and reorganize and train territorial units to replace the ARVN units in their area of operations as soon as possible. The 22d ARVN Division area of responsibility was to the west of the sector area, oriented on the mountainous area. The mission of the 22d Division was to destroy the 3d NVA Division in the An Lao Valley area and west of Hoi Nhon. Enemy contact was at a low level for the remainder of the month.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 3-8

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MILITARY REGION 3

(C) The month of July was a stable period in Military Region 3 (Fig. 3-8). No major battles or operations occurred. The 5th Division at An Loc conducted a perimeter defense of the city against frequent light attacks-by-fire and occasional ground probes. Light contact occurred, and small pockets of enemy were encountered as the friendly forces conducted local patrolling and small unit operations in expanding the perimeter. Route 13 south of An Loc was still closed at the beginning of the month. The 7th NVA Division continued to stubbornly defend from well-fortified positions along the road at the 72 east-west grid line.

(C) On 1 July the relay station on Nui Ba Ra mountain near Song Be in Phuoc Long Province was attacked and destroyed by the E-2 NVA Regiment (Fig. 3-8). Elements of a ranger border defense battalion counterattacked by air assault and resecured the site late on the same day. ARVN Forces lost 89 killed and 47 wounded. Thirty enemy were killed in subsequent pursuit operations the following day, plus 100 killed by air.

(C) On 5 July the 3d Ranger Group consisting of 400 troops was withdrawn from An Loc. Approximately 1,000 replacements were taken in for the remaining units. This was the beginning of the 5th Division's relief by the 18th Division; by 10 July two regiments of the 18th Division had closed. All movements were by Vietnamese helicopters supported by American gunships. The Deputy Commander, Third Regional Assistance Command, BG Richard J. Tallman, was killed on 9 July by artillery fire at An Loc during a visit to finalize plans for the two division exchange. On 16 July the 18th Division completed the relief of the 5th Division and assumed responsibility for An Loc. On 12 July the 5th Division began deploying two regiments to Hau Nghia.

(C) At 0900 hours on 16 July the 25th Division attacked from Route 13 north of Chon Thanh to the west in an envelopment of the 7th NVA Division elements defending the highway. The attack progressed well against light enemy resistance. The envelopment maneuver apparently surprised the enemy and disrupted his support. One significant forward support supply cache was captured on the 18th. On 20 July the enemy strongpoint was neutralized. Considerable mine sweeping and road repair was necessary before the road could be opened for traffic. The road was still subject to harassing direct and indirect fires at the end of month.

(C) The 21st Division Headquarters and its 33d Regiment disengaged from the Route 13 area on 23 July and moved to Lai Khe. On 24 July these units returned to IV Corps control. The 31st Regiment and 9th Armored Cavalry Squadron of the

21st Division remained deployed on the Route 13 battlefield, under operational control of the 25th Division.

(C) On 26 July the 18th Division at An Loc began expanding its control to the east to facilitate future operations directed toward Quan Loi and to reoccupy the fire support base there. The 5th Ranger Group secured a hamlet two kilometers west on the approaches to the high ground overlooking the road to Quan Loi. On 27 July the 48th Regiment, supported by tactical air strikes, attacked and seized Hill 169 about three kilometers to the southeast of An Loc. On the same day the area of operations of the 25th Division was reduced to allow it to concentrate on clearing operations along Route 13. Road clearing operations continued for the remainder of the month against light contacts and harassing indirect fire.

(C) During August the 18th Division began the month at An Loc and remained there. The 25th Division conducted clearing operations on Route 13. The 5th Division conducted operations in Hau Nghia Province and around Lai Khe in Binh Duong Province. Battalion-size units were moved frequently during the month within the corps area to counter enemy activity as it flared from one place to another.

(C) On 5 August and again on 7 August friendly forces at the Nui Ba Den communications facility in Tay Ninh Province repelled ground probes by the D-16 NVA Sapper Battalion, killing 50 enemy and losing four killed and 13 wounded. On 21 August the enemy lost six killed in another probe.

(C) On 7 August the 18th Division started an operation to retake Quan Loi by seizing the high ground just east of An Loc. The operation moved slowly, especially as the attacking units came within range of the well-prepared defensive positions of the base camp. On 28 August the division conducted a relief of the attacking battalions and continued the attack on the 24th. At the end of the month the attacking force was 600 meters from the Quan Loi Base Camp.

(C) On 10 August friendly forces at Lai Khe annihilated a sapper company that penetrated the perimeter, killing 40 enemy while losing two killed and 18 wounded. In Binh Duong Province on 12 August the 6th Ranger Group deployed to Phu Loi. On 16 August the 3d Ranger Group moved from Tay Ninh to Ben Cat. Both of these moves were in response to enemy attempts to interdict Route 13 south of Lai Khe. On 26 August friendly forces on Route 13 north of Lai Khe were reinforced by two battalions. The 25th Division repositioned a regiment and began to expand its area of operations along the highway.

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Province west of Route 13 and the northwestern corner of Bien Hoa Province, including Tan Uyen. The division mission was to destroy the enemy in its area and block enemy movement into the Bien Hoa area. The division's third organic regiment, the 40th, deployed to Tay Ninh under the operational control of the III Corps Mobile Strike Force. Concurrent with the 25th Division redeployment, a combined task force was organized at Chon Thanh under control of the 3d Armored Brigade Headquarters.

(C) In late September, III Corps forces were shifted south and assumed a defensive posture deployed in an arch covering the northern approaches to Saigon. The general disposition of forces remained the same during the month of October, resulting in a concentration of forces in southern Binh Duong Province.

(C) On 9 October the 25th Division area of responsibility was expanded to include the area north of Phu Cuong and east of the Saigon River in Binh Duong Province. The 25th Division deployed two regiments near Phu Cuong and began to conduct operations to counter the enemy's attempts to wrest control of the populated area from the Government of South Vietnam. Several hamlets were contested throughout the month; however, enemy occupied hamlets were promptly cleared after South Vietnamese regular forces moved to the area.

(C) On 10 October the Capital Military District was reinforced with one ranger battalion, and two other battalions were alerted for movement. Subsequently, two ranger task forces were deployed north of Saigon along the Gia Dinh Province boundary, one task force east of the Saigon River and one west. On 14 October a second US air cavalry troop was deployed to III Corps and began

conducting surveillance of the critical areas throughout the region.

(C) The 81st Ranger Group returned to Military Region 3 on 14 October from Military Region 1 and was deployed to southern Binh Duong and southwestern Bien Hoa Province in a reconnaissance role for tactical air and artillery target acquisition. Also on 14 October the Territorial Force base camp at Minh Thanh on the Saigon River corridor in Binh Long Province was evacuated. It had been under attack for several days by the 205th NVA Independent Regiment and had been isolated since the North Vietnamese attacked An Loc in April. On 19 October the 3d Battalion, 7th Regiment, made contact with elements of the 7th NVA Division southwest of Ben Cat in Binh Duong Province. The enemy was caught in the open and suffered 103 killed from combined USAF and VNAF tactical air, ARVN artillery and ground firepower.

(C) From 19 to 25 October ARVN forces fought several battles with the 33d NVA Regiment near the Bien Hoa-Long Khanh Province boundary. The North Vietnamese made a concerted effort to cut Route 1 in this area, but friendly offensive actions prevented any long term interdiction of the road. On 19 October the 36th Ranger Battalion made contact fifteen kilometers southwest of Xuan Loc and killed 50 enemy while sustaining only nine wounded. A total of 142 enemy were killed during the period 19 to 20 October.

(C) In Phuoc Long Province near Dong Xoi on 27 October Territorial Forces engaged the D-368th VC Battalion and with Vietnamese tactical air support killed 100 enemy while losing two friendly killed and seven wounded. Territorial Forces initiated a high number of small operations during the month of October with favorable results.

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MILITARY REGION 4

(C) In Military Region 4 in early July major ARVN operations were being conducted across the border in the Khmer Republic (Fig. 3-10). On 3 July the 7th Division elements attacking north of the Elephant's Foot area made contact with probable units of the 271st NVA Independent Regiment, resulting in 115 enemy killed and ARVN losses of nine killed and 46 wounded (Fig. 3-11). The division made steady progress and by 8 July had advanced to Kampong Rou. On 9 July the division began to disengage because of pressure in Dinh Tuong Province by the DT1, 218th, and 215th Regiments. One regiment remained in the Khmer and the remainder of the division returned to northern Military Region 4. Through the skillful exploitation of B-52 strikes the operation accounted for over 700 enemy killed during the period 30 June to 9 July. On 4 July a combined South Vietnamese-Khmer operation started with the mission of clearing Route 1 from Neak Luong to Kampong Trabek. Two ARVN ranger battalions, a cavalry troop, and two FANK brigades attacked east from Neak Luong astride Route 1 towards Kampong Trabek. The operation progressed slowly primarily because of difficulties in coordinating between the South Vietnamese and Khmer troops; enemy resistance was light. On 19 July in a supporting operation, an ARVN ranger battalion and an armored cavalry squadron attacked north from Cai Cai toward Kampong Trabek, securing the latter on 24 July. The FANK units consolidated their positions around the town. The South Vietnamese left one ranger battalion in the Kampong Trabek - Neak Luong area and returned the other forces to Military Region 4 to counter the 5th NVA Division buildup in Dinh Tuong Province.

(C) On 8 July the 215th Regiment made an apparent all out effort to capture the district town of Sam Giang in Dinh Tuong Province. The fighting continued for five days. On 9 July four Regional Force battalions and one ranger battalion began moving to reinforce the Territorial Forces defending the town. On the night of 9 July the enemy attack reached the market place but was stopped with the support of American and Vietnamese gunships and a Cobra fire team. The friendly forces attempting to reinforce made contact two kilometers short of Sam Giang on 10 July and suffered heavy losses. On 11 July five ARVN battalions moved to Dinh Tuong as additional reinforcements. The arrival of these units relieved the pressure and subsequently forced the enemy to withdraw on 12 and 13 July. The 10th Regiment pursued the withdrawing enemy and made contact on 14 July killing 18. On 18 July the 67th and 76th Ranger Battalions were attacked early in the even-

ing by the 275th Regiment and sustained 36 killed, 53 wounded, and 53 missing. It was determined later that the enemy success resulted from a lack of security by the ranger battalions as they prepared night positions. Poor security was attributed to a shortage of leaders and lack of training and experience. Some companies had no officers and contained as many as 80 percent new recruits.

(C) On 25 July the IV Corps deployment of forces to meet the increased enemy activity in Dinh Tuong Province was completed. A corps forward command post opened at Dong Tam and assumed command of the 7th Division in Kien Tuong Province, a ranger task force of five battalions in western Dinh Tuong Province, and the Dinh Tuong Territorial Forces. The 15th Regiment, 9th Division was placed under operational control of Dinh Tuong Province. On 27 July a multiple battalion spoiling operation started in the northwestern area of Dinh Tuong. Seven preparatory B-52 strikes were employed on the night of the 26th and morning of the 27th. This operation inflicted heavy casualties on the 24th Regiment, C30B NVA Division, in both ground engagements and by B-52 strikes. Two ranger battalions, the 43d and 44th, engaged suspected elements of the 24th NVA Regiment on 29 July in a three day battle that accounted for 100 enemy killed with 13 friendly killed. In a small engagement 23 enemy were killed and 53 additional bodies were found. On 31 July two battalions of the 12th Regiment combat assaulted into the area south-east of the ranger operation to exploit B-52 strikes.

(C) In Chuong Thien Province on 10 July, the 2d Battalion, 14th Regiment was ambushed by an estimated enemy battalion of the 95A Regiment and suffered 87 killed, 102 wounded, and 108 missing, plus heavy losses in weapons and equipment.

(C) At the beginning of August ARVN forces were oriented toward the 5th NVA Division threat in the northern Delta, centered in Dinh Tuong Province. Early in the month ARVN and Territorial Forces continued to exploit B-52 strikes and conduct spoiling attacks into Base Area 470. Later information revealed that these friendly initiatives, coupled with B-52 and tactical air strikes, disrupted the timing of enemy plans. On 3 August the 12th Regiment, while exploiting B-52 strikes, killed 67 enemy north of Cai Lay. On the next night in Kien Tuong Province, 7th Division units killed 110 enemy from the 174th Regiment, 5th NVA Division, in a well-executed night attack.

(C) On 4 and 5 August the 12th Regiment engaged the 24th NVA Regiment and killed 170. Also in Dinh Tuong Province, on the 8th and 9th of August, the 14th Regiment made heavy contact and lost 35 government soldiers killed. On 10 August friendly forces, again exploiting B-52 strikes in

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Dinh Tuong Province, reported 128 enemy killed, 68 individual weapons, eight machine guns, and four mortars captured.

(C) The frequency of large scale engagements declined in the last half of the month. On 20 August in Dinh Tuong Province a Regional Force battalion exploiting a B-52 strike killed 92 enemy and found 30 killed by air. On the same day the 14th Regiment became heavily engaged with the DT1 NVA Regiment near the Dinh Tuong - Kien Hoa Province borders and suffered 17 killed and 58 wounded while killing 18 enemy.

(C) Although major engagements declined, numerous friendly initiated small contacts took a toll of the enemy. During a 24 hour period on 24 and 25 August there were 71 friendly initiated contacts accounting for 222 enemy killed and 75 weapons captured. The Territorial Forces were well represented in these contacts.

(C) On 25 August two companies of the Z15 NVA Regiment attempted to interdict Route 4 west of Cai Lay in Dinh Tuong Province. By coincidence, an ARVN infantry regiment escorted by a cavalry troop was redeploying from eastern Dinh Tuong to the area northwest of Cai Lay. When the convoy made contact, the regiment deployed and engaged the enemy using the supporting artillery in a direct fire role. After a three-hour battle the road was reopened. As a result of the engagement 51 enemy were killed and two prisoners captured. ARVN losses were four killed, 31 wounded, and one 105mm howitzer destroyed.

(C) In the Khmer Republic ARVN began an operation 22 kilometers northeast of Cai Cai on 4 August. A battalion air assaulted into the area, in conjunction with a ground attack by another battalion and cavalry troop. On 5 August these units were reinforced by another ranger battalion. Sporadic contact was made on 5 and 6 August with elements of the 207th Regiment, C30B NVA Division, resulting in 52 enemy killed.

(C) On 10 August the 11th Regiment engaged an estimated enemy battalion 15 kilometers north of Moc Hoa in the Elephant's Foot area. The contact with the 174th Regiment, 5th NVA Division continued for two days and resulted in 222 enemy killed and 15 friendly killed.

(C) On 16 August the 7th Ranger Group was committed to support besieged Khmer units at Kampong Trabek. The attack began from the south against light and scattered resistance. Two days later significant contact was made eight kilometers south of Kampong Trabek, which resulted in 58 enemy killed and no friendly casualties. On 21 August the Ranger Group linked up with Khmer units southwest of the city. Mass graves containing 141 enemy bodies, apparently killed by tactical air,

were found nearby. On 23 August two ranger companies entered Kampong Trabek from south and east of the Trabek River. On 25 August ARVN forces returned to Military Region 4; Kampong Trabek was secured by Khmer units. The South Vietnamese forces withdrew to release four ranger battalions for deployment to Military Region 1.

(C) At the beginning of September, IV Corps forces in the Delta were oriented toward preventing the infiltration of the 1st NVA Division into the Seven Mountains area, interdicting enemy logistics activities along the Khmer border in the northern Delta, and fixing and destroying main force units in the central and southern Delta. The 21st Division, after returning from the Route 13 operation south of An Loc, had completed its refresher training in late August and was fully deployed in the southern Delta by 1 September. On 2 September the 7th Ranger Group of four battalions deployed to Military Region 1.

(C) On 2 September two ranger battalions and two armored cavalry squadrons launched operations in the Seven Mountains area. On 3 September the operation was reinforced with an additional ranger battalion that air assaulted into the area. The 44th Special Tactical Zone forward Command Post at Chi Lang, Chau Doc Province, controlled the operation. Sporadic contact was made as the operation continued throughout the month. The operation was credited by the IV Corps Commander, MG Nguyen Vinh Nghi, with blunting the infiltration efforts of the 1st NVA Division.

(C) On 10 September the 31st Regiment, 21st Division, with two organic battalions and two Regional Force battalions, deployed to Chau Doc Province under operational control of the 44th Special Tactical Zone. The zone boundary was shifted to the west to allow a concentration of forces in the Seven Mountains area. It was shifted farther westward on 22 September. These moves were in response to intelligence that the entire 1st NVA Division was attempting to infiltrate in the Seven Mountains area and that elements of the division had already moved into Chau Doc Province.

(C) In the Elephant's Foot area the 7th Division conducted anti-infiltration and lines of communication interdiction throughout the month. In addition to sporadic contact, significant supply caches were captured, including 125 tons of rice and 215 weapons on 14 and 15 September.

(C) On 13 September the IV Corps mobile force made one of its most successful contacts and killed 116 enemy of the Z18 NVA Regiment in Dinh Tuong Province with light friendly losses. This particular engagement was the result of mobility and quick reaction on the part of IV Corps forces.

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An ARVN patrol moving through the Delta.

(C) In September the South Vietnamese Navy in Military Region 4 was integrated into the overall offensive campaign with the regular and Territorial Forces. A naval liaison officer, placed with each ARVN division and the 44th Special Tactical Zone Headquarters, commanded naval forces in each area of responsibility.

(C) At the beginning of the month of October, IV Corps forces remained oriented toward preventing the infiltration of the 1st NVA Division in the Seven Mountains area, interdicting enemy logistics activities along the Khmer border in the northern Delta, and fixing and destroying main force units in the central and southern Delta.

(C) In the Khmer Republic, 13 kilometers southeast of Kampong Trabek on 8 October, the 3d Battalion, 10th Regiment, accounted for 109 enemy killed in a combined ground, American air cavalry, and Vietnamese tactical air operation. Friendly losses were two killed and 11 wounded. On 8 October the same ARVN battalion made contact in the same area and killed 69 enemy, while losing nine killed and 48 wounded. Documents from the battle-

field identified the enemy in both of these contacts as the 207th NVA Regiment. South Vietnamese soldiers reinforced to two regiments in this area. On 23 October, 38 kilometers southwest of Svay Rieng, the 11th Regiment made contact in an enemy rear service area and captured a large cache containing numerous weapons and supplies. Seven anti-aircraft machine guns and various pioneer tools, including 1,000 shovels and 300 picks, were the major items in the cache. Casualties were 42 enemy killed, 10 friendly killed, and 35 friendly wounded. On 4 October in the Seven Mountains area of the Khmer ARVN rangers made contact and employed VNAF tactical air, resulting in 54 enemy killed; no ARVN losses were reported.

(C) On 17 October the district town of Sam Giang in Dinh Tuong Province came under attack. Friendly forces repelled the attack, inflicting 34 enemy killed while sustaining four killed and 32 wounded. The 275th Regiment, 5th NVA Division, continued to harass in the Sam Giang area. Elements of the 9th Division converged on Sam Giang

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from the north and west and relieved the pressure on the town.

(C) On 24 October IV Corps began to deploy forces from the Cai Cai area along the Khmer border to the Dinh Tuong - Go Cong Province border area to counter increased 24th NVA Regiment activity. Other unit shifts included the movement of two ranger battalions into northwest Kien Giang Province to prevent attempts by the 52d Regiment,

1st NVA Division to establish a stronghold in that area. On 24 and 25 October the 14th Regiment made contact in Dinh Tuong Province with the 6th Regiment, 5th NVA Division, and killed 57 enemy. Friendly losses were 32 killed and 36 wounded. On 30 October, 14 kilometers northwest of Cai Lay, a Regional Force battalion killed 48 enemy from the 6th Regiment, 5th NVA Division, with friendly losses of five wounded.



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CHAPTER 4

PREPARATION FOR THE TRUCE:

NOVEMBER 1972 - JANUARY 1973

(U) The time from the end of October to the beginning of the cease-fire divides into three distinct periods. The first lasted until mid-December during which time the Republic sought to solidify its position and the North Vietnamese and the NLF conducted a shrill campaign to convince the world that the US had reneged on a previous agreement. The second was the period of the intensive bombing of Hanoi and Halphong from 18 to 29 December, after which the third period of resumed negotiations began and ended with the implementation of the cease-fire on 28 January 1973.

(U) During November and the first half of December, President Thieu was busily preparing his people for the cease-fire. His hard-line stand on cease-fire terms gained wide support from rival political factions and the Saigon press. President Nixon's victory and MG Haig's subsequent visit to Saigon heartened the South Vietnamese. The Republic sent envoys throughout the Far East to explain the nation's position and solicit support. At home news bulletins and public meetings were used to gain popular support for national sovereignty and self-determination; opposition to a coalition government was also stressed. In addition, 5,000 military cadets and trainees were sent to the secure villages to explain to the people the Republic's position on the cease-fire, inform them of the RVNAF victories and Communist difficulties, expose Communist cease-fire schemes, and inspire vigilance in the villagers. In December, when it became apparent that the Paris talks were again stalled, Thieu continued to exhort the South Vietnamese despite his pessimism. Just prior to and during the December bombing Thieu publicly inaugurated his Democracy Party in an attempt to gain a national political following. He also promulgated 37 laws in the three-week period before his special powers expired on 27 December. Thieu did not seek an extension of special powers. During mid-January MG Haig came once more to Saigon for a final meeting with President Thieu. Technical discussions had resumed on 2 January in Paris, and many sensed that a cease-fire was near.

(U) Having unsuccessfully attempted to preempt President Nixon on the cease-fire, the North accused the Americans of stalling to rush aid to South Vietnam and conducting repressive police operations and complained of Thieu's intransigence. The NLF claimed that the imperialists had had to

accept their failure and joined with the North in denouncing US arms shipments. However, by mid-December Hanoi was advising its cadres that peace was only a tactical move to achieve objectives. After bitter denunciation of the US bombing raids, the Communists returned to the bargaining table and agreed on a cease-fire effective on 28 January.

(S) From Dr. Kissinger's announcement of an impending cease-fire in late October to the implementation of the cease-fire was a period of heightened activity for MACV. Contingency plans to deal with the US withdrawal and prisoner recovery had to be made, the logistical effort ENHANCE PLUS had to be dealt with, and on-going programs in a myriad of fields had to be prepared for close-out or transfer to the Vietnamese or a successor US agency. Planning was complicated by the changing assumptions and the necessity to closely hold much information. Among the major plans was the formation of successor agencies, US Support Activities Group/7th AF, which would deploy to Thailand in the event of a cease-fire, the organization and staffing of a Defense Attache Office to handle residual in-country MACV functions, and the US Delegation to the Four Party Joint Military Commission which was to implement portions of the Paris accords. Personnel redeployment, materiel retrograde, and the closeout of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam were also planned. In the event no cease-fire obtained, a drawdown was planned to reduce MACV to 20,000 men by 1 March, 15,000 men by 1 May, and 5,500 men by 30 June. The three months which eventually elapsed between Dr. Kissinger's announcement and the cease-fire greatly assisted the planning for a smooth pullout of US forces.

(U) During the three months preceding the cease-fire—November, December, and January—the attitude of the people was one of watchful waiting, hope for peace, and uncertainty about the future. Except for enemy attempts to gain control of hamlets in early October and late January, military activity decreased as the enemy retrained and refitted, and ARVN concentrated on population and lines of communication control. Politically, both sides intensified propaganda and proselyting efforts. Terrorism continued high, with large increases in January. Self-development continued to make good progress except in contested areas, as decreased

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enemy activity allowed officials to turn their attention to those programs.

(U) The onset of the rainy season in Military Region 1 hampered both ground and air movement, slowing the pace of military operations. Sporadic enemy attempts at population control were beaten back by the ARVN and Territorial Forces. Pleiku and Kontum Provinces in Military Region 2 saw the enemy thwarted in his attempts to capture more land, while the remainder of the region was quiet. Military Region 3 experienced a continued low level of military activity with most Territorial Force casualties falling to booby traps. The Delta experienced an upsurge in enemy attacks of rather low intensity. Throughout the country, enemy activity increased with the cease-fire, but nowhere were the enemy's gains more than temporary.

(U) Political efforts increased on both sides. The Republic conducted a propaganda offensive in November and December which saw 5,000 junior officers and cadets dispatched to the nation's villages to explain the Republic's cease-fire position and prepare the people for the cease-fire period. In addition, pro-South Vietnam posters, banners, and flags were seen throughout the land as the people rallied behind President Thieu's government. The VC countered with their own campaign of terror and night propaganda meetings.

(U) The progress of development programs was generally good throughout the period. The Local Revenue Improvement Program, designed to eventually insure the fiscal self-sufficiency of each village, was going well in each military region, with Military Regions 3 and 4 close to or ahead of the goals. Land use surveys to aid urban development plans and programs had been completed in nearly all of the autonomous cities and should aid post-war planning. Land reform, considered essential to popular support of the government, was progressing well, hindered only by the Republic's ability to secure land already distributed or scheduled to be distributed. The ambitious three-year goal of one million hectares distributed would be only 80 percent reached, but the government offices to effect land reform continued to process applications at a rapid rate.

(U) Public works on lines of communication proceeded at a rate about equal to the enemy's destruction of them. Nevertheless, progress was considered satisfactory under the conditions. Installation of electrical generators in the larger cities was on schedule. Village self-development projects were well above 90 percent completion, reflecting increased local interest, more technical ability, and better management.

(U) Of the 200,000 new refugees generated just prior to the cease-fire most were displaced for only

a few hours or days. The permanent refugee population was just under 700,000 and was a continuing burden to the Republic. Ministry of Social Welfare officials concentrated on improving life in the camps and assisting those who could return to their homes.

(U) The uneasy stability of the late summer economy turned to stagnation characterized by an unwillingness to take investment risks in the final quarter. Most manufacturing lines remained depressed. Real output appeared not to have grown in 1972. Import activity had not regained pre-invasion levels. Government spending remained high, contributing to inflationary pressures. Unemployment in the urban areas was a problem which the government did not address. On the plus side, the government was acting to control and stimulate the economy, although results were mixed. New tax decrees were enacted to substantially increase revenue by taxing urban and rural real property. Further, despite the setback caused by the invasion, the Local Revenue Improvement Program goal of \$VN 5.4 billion appeared to be within reach. Overall, most forms of economic activity were affected by a "wait and see" attitude on the part of investors and consumers.

(C) In late October the JCS announced an accelerated equipment delivery program for RVNAF, Project ENHANCE PLUS, in anticipation of the cease-fire agreement. Designed to complete equipping of the RVNAF before the terms of the cease-fire agreement halted further materiel buildup, the input of equipment resulted in one of the most remarkable MACV achievements of the year. Between 23 October and 12 December aircraft delivered 4,998 short tons of cargo and ships delivered 99,851 measurement tons of cargo to Vietnam. In all, over 105,000 major items of equipment were delivered.

(C) Associated with Project ENHANCE PLUS was a title transfer of all equipment and facilities destined for eventual transfer to the Vietnamese government and armed forces. This was done with the understanding that the US would continue to use specific facilities and equipment until no longer needed. Certain designated facilities were title transferred to the US Embassy and to USAID for their use following the US military withdrawal. The title transfers were completed by 10 November. A total of 318 facilities had been transferred, abandoned, or dismantled by US and Free World forces during 1972, including the multi-million dollar bases at Cam Ranh Bay and Long Binh. An additional 211 facilities were title transferred, but retained until no longer needed.

(U) By year end 1972, Vietnamese transportation, ordnance, engineer, POL, ammunition, and signal support units had relocated from the greater Saigon

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Refugees were provided temporary shelter while they waited to return to their homes.

area to Long Binh under the 1st ARVN Associated Depot.

(U) The Vietnamization of aerial ports was completed on 1 December when the VNAF assumed responsibility for aerial port activities at Tan Son Nhut. The US maintained small detachments of military and civilian contract personnel at several air bases to handle US secure cargo and mail. In a related activity, the USAF air cargo tonnage transported within Vietnam had declined steadily until December, when the VNAF transition from C-123 to C-130 aircraft began. Several C-123 squadrons stood down to provide personnel for C-130 training, and the USAF airlift support requirements increased accordingly. In retrospect the USAF airlift support had fluctuated throughout the year, affected by the US drawdown, the enemy offensive, and the ENHANCE PLUS-induced VNAF force structure changes.

(U) The final logistics port facilities of Newport and Cat Lai were transferred to the ARVN on 31 December. The US retained control of Newport

until 28 March and the Vung Tau port, although an ARVN responsibility, continued to be operated by civilian contractors until the same date.

(U) Although a few US military and civilian advisors continued assisting the RVNAF engineers with line of communication (LOC) construction until late 1972, only lump sum contractors and RVNAF engineers were active in LOC work by early 1973. Asphalt and cement plants and rock quarries were all operated by the RVNAF and contractors. On 1 January 1973 USAID assumed responsibility for managing the LOC program.

(U) The communications-electronics transition program continued to accelerate and all facilities were title transferred to the RVNAF by 10 November, except those retained by the US Embassy.

(S) Several major items of equipment were provided to the ARVN under Project ENHANCE PLUS; however, JGS indicated that it intended to use this equipment for training and float, with no new units to be created, with the possible exception of the activation of artillery units to compensate

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F-5 Freedom Fighters were part of the equipment delivered under Project ENHANCE PLUS.

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for the withdrawal of ROKFV artillery.

(C) During this time frame the VNAF received 619 additional aircraft under Project ENHANCE PLUS. The addition of these aircraft to the VNAF inventory necessitated a revision to the VNAF force structure in order to incorporate, as much as possible, the aircraft into the active flying inventory. This sparked the standdown of various VNAF squadrons throughout the remainder of MACV's existence, the return to the USAF of older model aircraft, initiation of training programs for air and ground crews on the newer aircraft, and a transition program to bring the VNAF from a force structure of 58 to 66 squadrons. The influx of materiel for the ARVN and the VNN was either stockpiled or issued as needed; there were no new units created in either service.

(S) In order to provide the VNBC a one battalion amphibious raid capability, in November JCS approved the ENHANCE PLUS addition of 31 LVTP-5 amphibious vehicles as substitutes for the LVTP-7 until the latter became available in FY 74. The required spaces would come from within the

VNBC force structure. Also added were a TOW antitank company and a signal intelligence unit to provide the VNBC capability in these areas. There were no significant VNN force structure changes during this period.

(S) In late January 1973 the results of the JGS/MACV FY 74 RVNAF Force Structure Review were approved by COMUSMACV and forwarded to CINCPAC and JCS for final approval.

(S) Concerning the US advisory effort, the combat division advisory teams were further reduced 15 spaces during this period. As the troop draw-down continued, and as a probable cease-fire approached, the advisory effort within the training establishment was reduced among field elements and resulted in advisors operating at progressively higher headquarters as reductions continued.

(C) With the large influx of ENHANCE PLUS hardware entering the VNAF inventory during this period, US mobile training teams assumed added importance with their mission of training VNAF crews, maintenance personnel, and Vietnamese instructor crews in the new aircraft.

AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

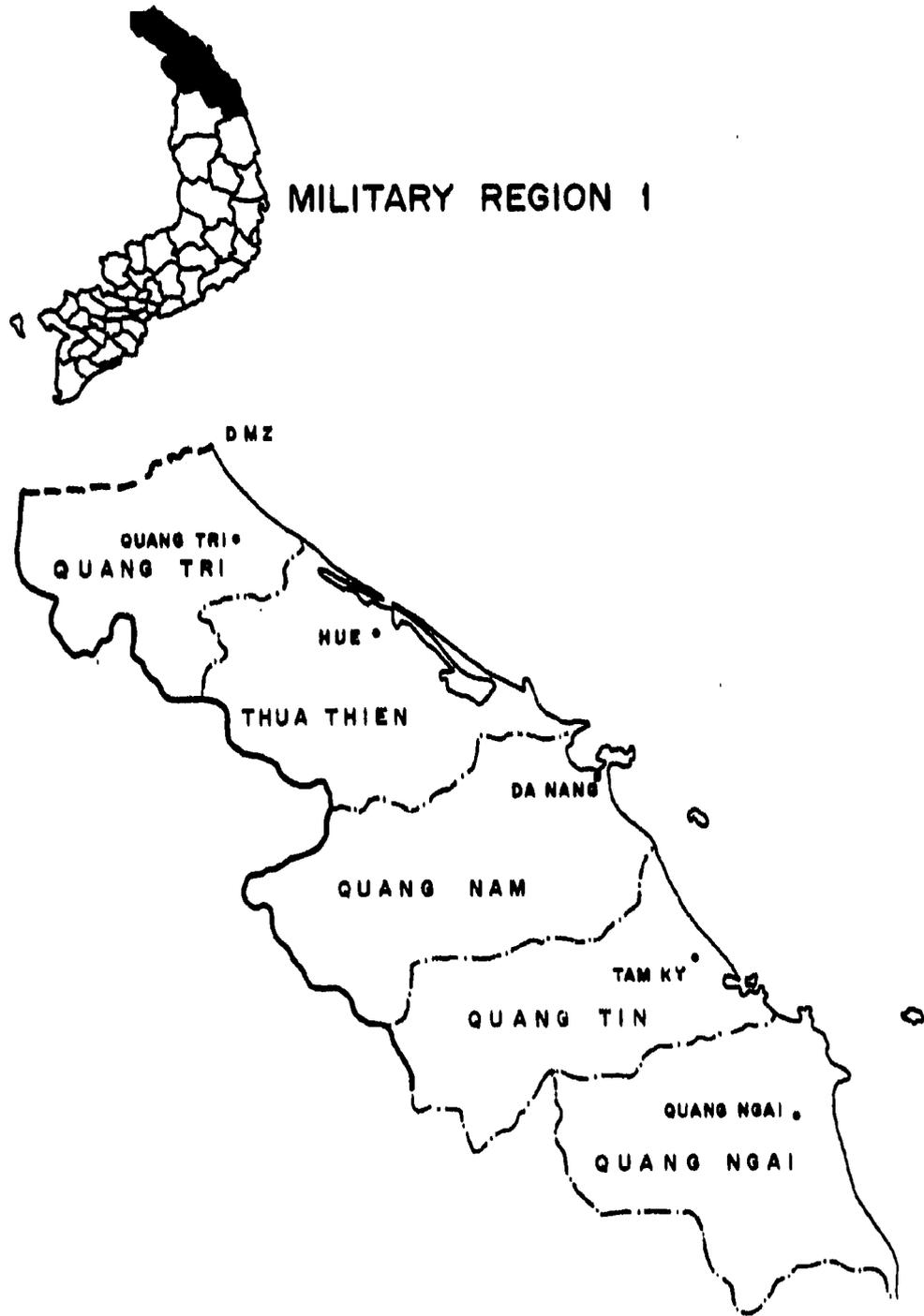
(S) On 28 October air operations north of 20° were halted. The assets of the LINEBACKER force thus released were applied mostly to the interdiction campaign in Laos. The USAF also deployed the A-7 aircraft for the first time in southeast Asia. The first A-7 missions were flown on 16 October. The A-7 proved to be a valuable weapons system, particularly for close air support. Because it had excellent navigational equipment, it was heavily used during periods of marginal weather. The A-7 became the primary aircraft used for SAR CAP, officially assuming that commitment on 15 November. The addition of the A-7 resources plus the North Vietnam bombing restrictions increased the available sorties for South Vietnam, Laos, and the Khmer Republic. The largest increase was in Navy sorties which had previously been utilized in Route Pack 6. The USAF A-37 Squadron which operated from Bien Hoa AB and flew mostly in South Vietnam, was deactivated. Its phase out reduced the

USAF TACAIR totals for October. The increase in TACAIR sorties in November abruptly reversed in December, as the restrictions were lifted over North Vietnam, and a high priority was given to the LINEBACKER II campaign during late December. This was noticeable in the B-52 sortie totals for South Vietnam where, for the first time since the enemy offensive began, less than half of the total ARC LIGHT sorties were flown in South Vietnam. Each flurry of speculation of a possible cease-fire set off a series of ground actions to secure key points and consolidate control prior to a cease-fire. These, in turn, increased the demand for close air support. The enemy used harassing rocket attacks on air installations during the period from October through January, striking Da Nang, Tan Son Nhut, and Bien Hoa on several occasions, resulting in minor damage. The last of these attacks occurred at Tan Son Nhut AB exactly 1 1/4 hours before the cease-fire went into effect.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 4-1

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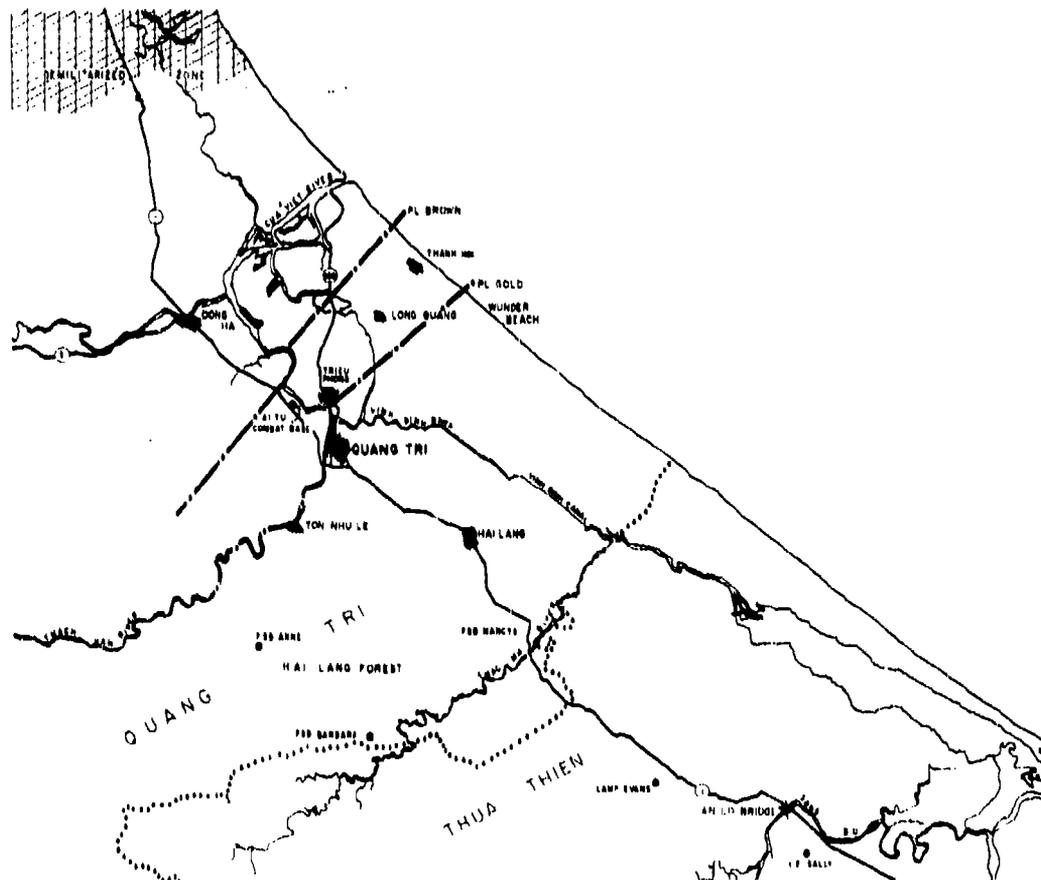
GROUND OPERATIONS, NOVEMBER 1972 - JANUARY 1973

MILITARY REGION 1

(C) A battalion of the Vietnamese Marine Division crossed the Thach Han River near the Quang Tri Citadel on the evening of 1 November (Fig. 4-1). The operation was planned as a limited objective attack as far north as the Ai Tu Combat Base (Fig. 4-2). Enemy resistance was much stronger than anticipated, and the marines were forced to withdraw the following day after suffering moderate casualties. The Marine Division continued planning for limited objective operations south of the Cua Viet River. Indications were that the enemy was aware of these plans, as forward marine units were continually subjected to heavy indirect fire of 1,500 to 2,500 rounds of mortar, rocket, and artillery daily. In addition, heavy monsoon rains throughout the month hampered ground movements and limited air operations primarily to non-visual bombing methods.

(C) On 11 November the Marine Division launched a four-battalion frontal attack northward toward Phase Line Brown. Flooding and enemy attacks-by-fire limited progress along the Vinh Dinh River, but the 8th Marine Battalion, nearest the coastline, made good progress. A short break in weather conditions on 14 November permitted more effective use of tactical air support, and 126 secondary explosions were reported by air crews. B-52 strikes were also concentrated south of the Cua Viet River and were credited with reducing enemy attacks-by-fire as well as causing numerous secondary explosions. However, a planned envelopment to the west by the 8th Marine Battalion did not materialize because the attack along the Vinh Dinh River had made little progress.

(C) On 17 November, in an effort to increase the momentum of the marine offensive, ten B-52 strikes were employed just south of the Cua Viet



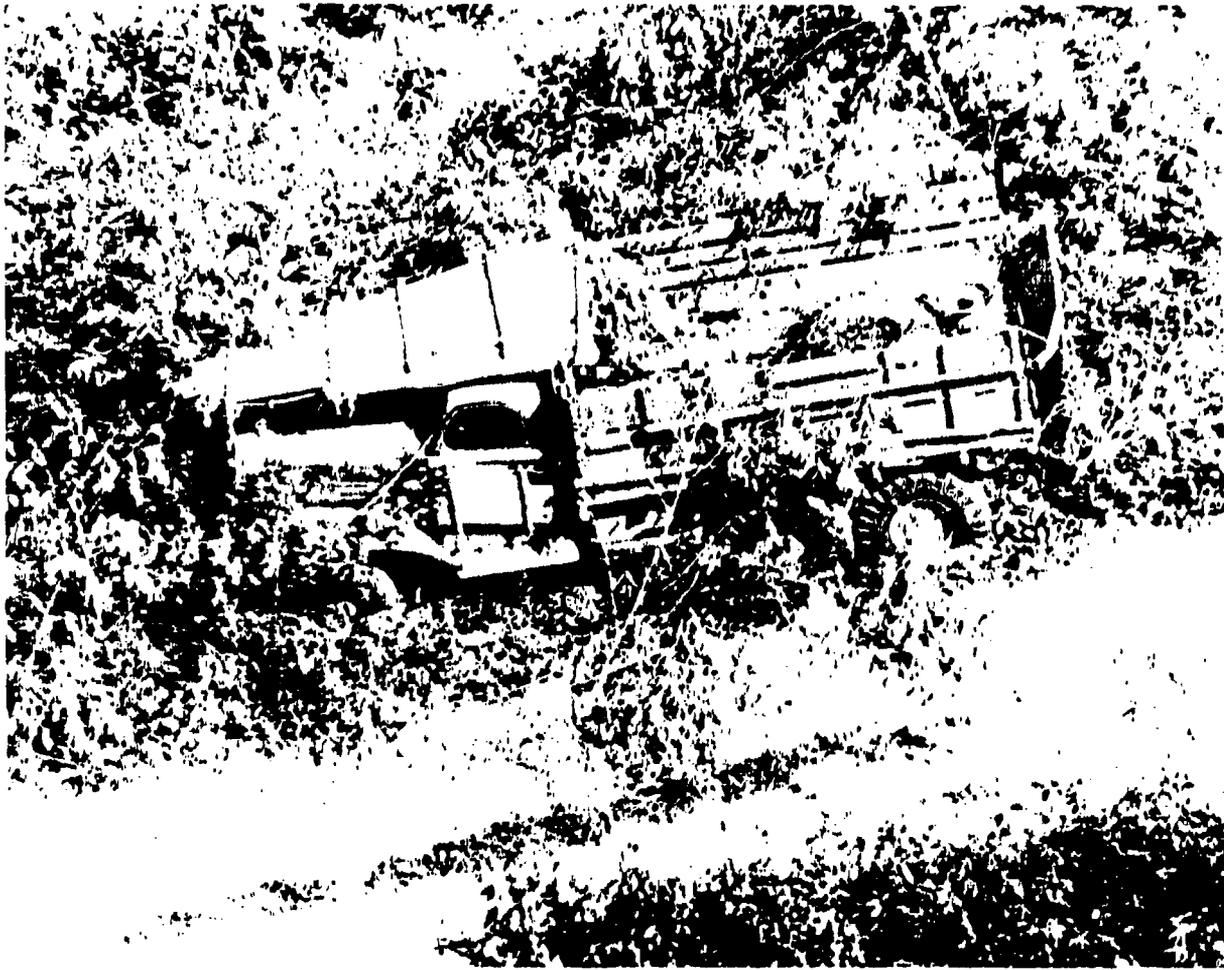
Source: MACMHB

Figure: 4-2

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A Russian-made Molotova truck damaged by TACAIR and abandoned in Quang Tri Province.

River, and five strikes were placed in the Dong Ha area. Naval gunfire also was increased, and the marines units near the coast reached objectives along Phase Line Brown the following day. The momentum was short-lived, as heavy rains and swollen streams severely restricted tactical and logistical movement. Since deteriorating weather had restricted air operations to unobserved delivery techniques, the US Navy increased gunfire support to approximately 4,000 rounds daily for the week ending 25 November.

(C) On 25 November, the Marine Division committed the 258th Brigade with three battalions to the offensive in an area of operations between the Thach Han and Vinh Dinh Rivers. The 147th Brigade, also with three battalions, retained the area of operations from the river to the coastline, leaving the 369th Brigade to defend Quang Tri City.

During a relief of units an enemy attack achieved limited success, following a preparation of approximately 3,000 rounds which killed 27 marines and wounded 45. The marines counterattacked two days later and restored the position against determined enemy resistance. Activity was reduced the last three days of the month as heavy rains and extensive flooding restricted operations.

(C) During November the Vietnamese Airborne Division made significant progress toward securing FSBs Anne and Barbara areas in the Hai Lang Forest, but little progress was made toward securing the southeast bank of the Thach Han River south of Quang Tri City. Large quantities of enemy materiel were discovered, most of which had been previously damaged by tactical air and B-52 strikes. On 1 November in the vicinity of Barbara, 30 Molotova trucks were discovered, two in good condition.

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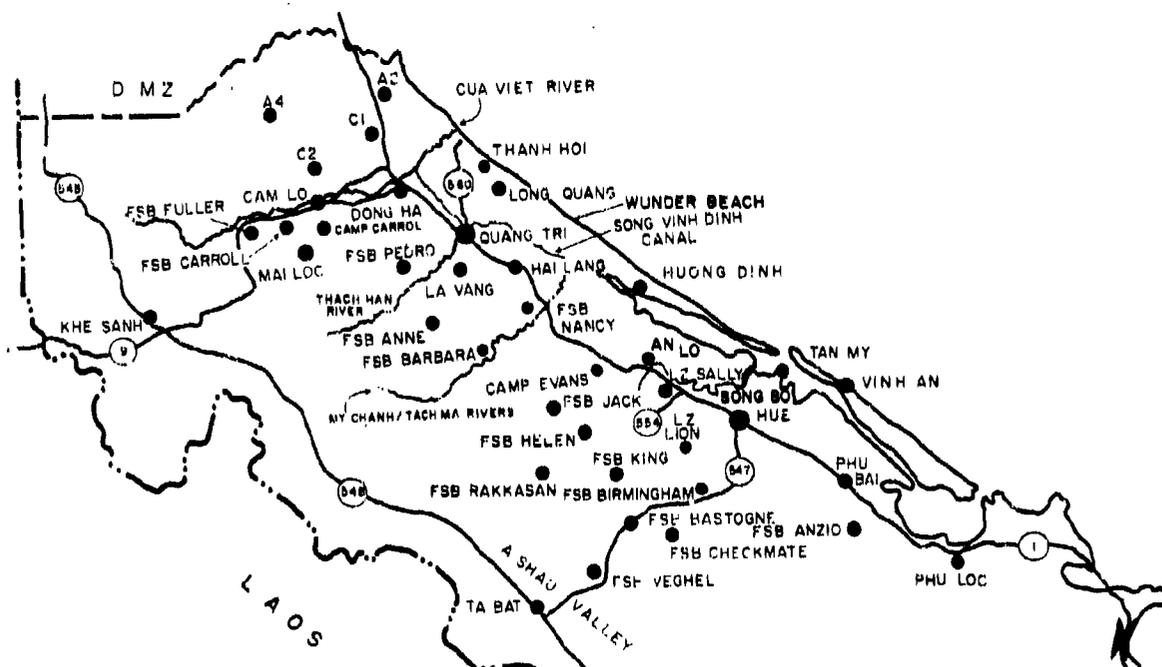
(C) Spurred by the success of the 3d Airborne Brigade's attack on Barbara, the 2d Brigade attack to retake Anne gained momentum against a stubborn enemy defense. Large quantities of enemy materiel were found, as the brigade advanced despite heavy monsoon rains and increased enemy resistance. On 9 November the 2d Brigade initiated a coordinated attack to seize Anne. The assaulting elements were in sporadic heavy contact for several days, but by 13 November the western portion of the firebase was under friendly control. Intensive tactical air support against heavily fortified enemy positions and B-52 strikes to the west enabled the airborne elements to seize Anne the following day, and to continue the attack to the north and west. A summary of major equipment captured in the Anne-Barbara areas included 30 artillery pieces, four tanks, 41 mortars, 16 recoilless rifles, 54 machine guns, and 55 antiaircraft weapons.

(C) On 24 November the Airborne Division made several changes in unit deployments. The 7th Ranger Group replaced the 3d Airborne Brigade at Barbara, and the 1st Airborne Brigade exchanged its battalions along the Thach Han River. Three days later an estimated battalion-sized enemy force attacked the 2d Brigade units defending Anne. The attack was repulsed with 34 enemy killed, while airborne losses were 17 killed and 46 wounded. Toward

the end of the month, activity decreased throughout the Hai Lang Forest area when heavy rains caused widespread flooding.

(C) In Thua Thien Province during November the 1st Division was deployed along a line generally from FSB Bastogne to the Hai Van Pass (Fig. 4-3). Each regiment of the division provided one battalion as a ready reaction force in the event enemy activity increased in the provincial lowlands. Phu Loc District was of primary concern as the 5th and 6th NVA Regiments were believed to be operating in the high ground south of the district town. On 4 November the boundary between the 54th and 51st Regiments was altered to provide for a higher concentration of forces. Sporadic heavy contacts of short duration were reported by the 51st Regiment and Territorial Forces during the first week of November as these units moved into the Dong Truoi and Dong Nom Mountains.

(C) Numerous battalion-size operations were conducted outward from the monsoon defense line. These operations were designed to preempt any 324B NVA Division attempts to infiltrate into the provincial lowlands and apply pressure against lines of communication and population centers. The operations were largely successful; however, on 9 November an enemy force interdicted Route 1, 11 kilometers east of Phu Loc. Territorial Forces



Source: MACMH

Figure 4-3

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were reinforced with an armored cavalry unit, and the highway was reopened the following day.

(C) On 12 November, BG Le Van Than assumed command of the 1st Division. For the remainder of the month each regiment conducted company and battalion-size operations throughout southern Thua Thien Province against light resistance from the 5th and 8th Independent Regiments and elements of the 324B Division. Enemy attacks-by-fire were light and sporadic and did minor damage.

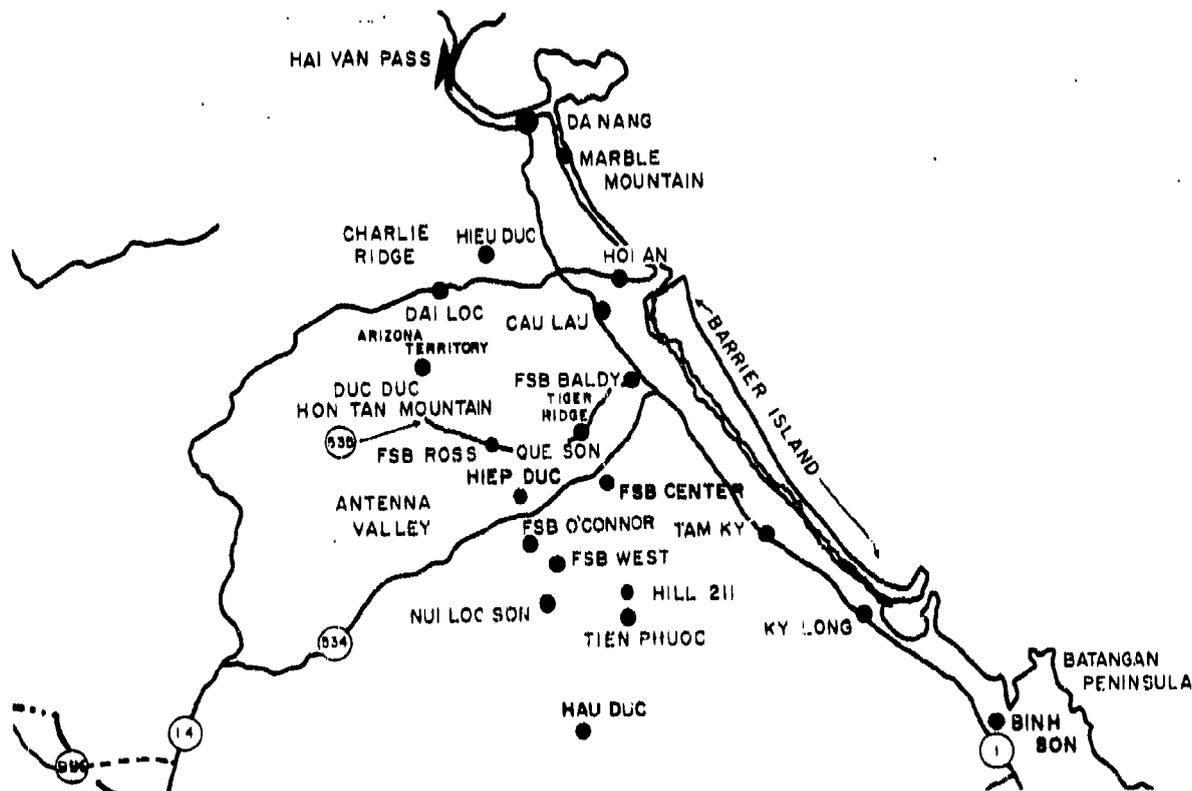
(C) During November in Quang Nam Province the 3d Division secured the Da Nang military complex and conducted operations in the Que Son Valley (Fig. 4-4). Other sweep operations were conducted into Antenna Valley and around population centers in the provincial lowlands. These operations were closely coordinated with the Territorial Forces.

(C) At the beginning of the month the 57th Regiment conducted an operation to retake the old Que Son District Headquarters. Enemy resistance was sporadically heavy, but ARVN forces seized the compound on 2 November and continued to expand their control to the south and west against light enemy resistance. Airstrikes in support of this

operation accounted for 98 enemy dead. Concurrent with the Que Son operation, elements of the 2d Regiment and one battalion of the 56th Regiment were deployed to the Hai Van Pass area north of Da Nang. Although an enemy force was known to be in the area, only light contacts were reported.

(C) At mid-month the 56th and 57th Regiments exchanged areas of operations, and the 2d Regiment began an operation in the Duc Duc-Dai Loc area, also known as the Arizona Territory. Activity during this period consisted of widespread enemy attacks-by-fire against South Vietnamese positions and terrorism against government officials. On 15 November a prisoner led the Dien Ban National Police to a cache of 1,600 Viet Cong flags. Other reports indicated that the enemy was concentrating on degrading the Government pacification efforts. The 2d Regiment concluded the operation in the Dai Loc area on 24 November and began a sweep of Charlie Ridge the following day. The operation progressed well against light enemy resistance.

(C) In the Tien Phuoc-Hau Duc area of Quang Tin Province Territorial Forces and elements of the 2d Division conducted operations against the 711th NVA Division. In addition, Territorial Forces



Source: MACMHR

Figure: 4-4

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provided security for lines of communication and population centers throughout the coastal lowlands. During the first three days of the month, operations in the Hau Duc area resulted in 29 enemy killed and two captured, while friendly losses were 15 killed and 20 wounded. The security of Hau Duc deteriorated during the first week as the enemy interdicted the road and occupied a village between Hau Duc and Tien Phuoc. The village was retaken on 7 November, and the road secured on the 8th; however, flooding prevented overland resupply. The 6th Regiment continued operations to secure the high ground around Hau Duc and to return nearby outposts to government control. By 13 November all outposts had been retaken and reoccupied by the Territorial Forces. On 16 November the 5th Regiment replaced the 6th Regiment in the Tien Phuoc-Hau Duc area. Activity continued at a low level for the rest of the month.

(C) Combat activity in Quang Ngai Province in November was generally at a reduced level as ARVN and Territorial Forces maintained security of lines of communication and government installations. As the month began, the 1st Ranger Group was deployed in eastern Binh Son-Son Tinh Districts, while the 4th Regiment conducted operations along Route 1 in southern Quang Ngai Province. Ranger units commanded by the 11th Ranger Group Tactical Headquarters secured the Ba To area. The 5th Regiment operated around Quang Ngai City (Fig. 4-5).

(C) Enemy pressure against ranger units at Ba To increased as the month began. Following enemy ground attack, supported by 120mm mortars on 3 November, the 77th Ranger Border Defense Battalion was forced to withdraw to positions south-southeast of San Juan Hill. The following day the 4th Regiment was given responsibility for the Ba To area and two battalions were airlifted into the area. The rangers were returned to Quang Ngai City to rest and refit. Activity then returned to a low level. On 14 November an element of the 4th Regiment air assaulted into an area just north of the Ba To District Headquarters with the mission of sweeping the old headquarters compound and the former ranger compound and to destroy enemy forces in that area. On 16 November the South Vietnamese flag was raised over the headquarters. Late that day an enemy counterattack forced the ARVN battalion to withdraw toward the north, and a B-52 strike was placed on the district headquarters. As this battalion was attempting to link-up with its sister battalion, it was attacked again on 21 November. The positions were overrun resulting in heavy losses of seven killed, 52 wounded, and 60 missing, 30 of whom later returned. The unit was then moved to Duc Pho to rest and refit.

Other 4th Regiment units began a sweep of the San Juan Hill area; however, enemy resistance was light. Toward the end of the month heavy rains caused flooding and road damage, and the fire base at San Juan Hill was forced to rely on aerial resupply.

(C) Although activity in eastern Binh Son and Son Tinh Districts was generally described as low level, ARVN and Territorial Forces continually made contacts with small enemy units. The enemy targets were usually Territorial Force outposts with occasional attempts to disrupt traffic along the highways. On 5 November all Territorial Forces were placed under the operational control of the 1st Ranger Group to improve coordination. However, on 8 November the 5th Regiment assumed the responsibility for the Batangan area, and the 1st Ranger Group began an operation into the Song Ve Valley with the group headquarters at Mo Duc. This operation was designed to destroy enemy strongholds and to extend the security of the lowlands. The ranger operation made good progress as a detailed search was conducted of the high ground between the Song Ve River and Route 1. On 12 November two large caches of rice were found and approximately 100 civilians were returned to friendly control. The rangers met only light enemy resistance and the operation was terminated on 17 November.

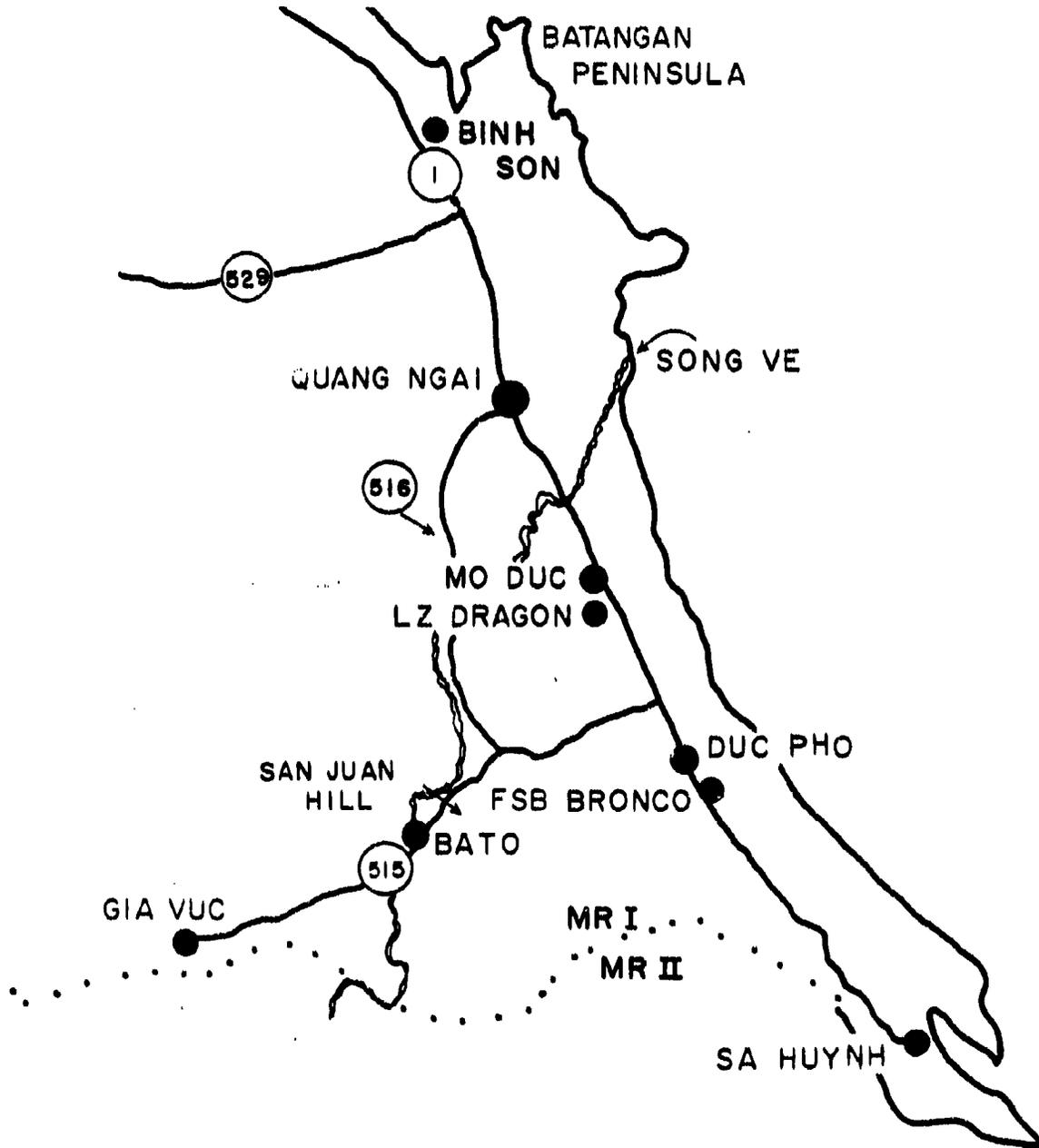
(C) On 16 November the 6th Regiment assumed responsibility for the Batangan area and began a search and clear operation in coordination with Territorial Forces. This operation did not result in any major engagements; however, 30 Ho Chi Minh rallied to friendly units. Activity decreased until the end of the month when several outposts were again overrun. The 6th Regiment reacted quickly and returned the outposts to government control.

(C) During December in Quang Tri Province heavy monsoon rains and flooding hampered operations along the northern front. For the most part air operations continued to depend on non-visual bombing techniques. Throughout the entire month combat activity in the Marine Division area consisted of enemy probing attacks and heavy attacks-by-fire. Attempts to attack north of Phase Line Gold were slowed by bad weather and strong enemy resistance. The only significant contact reported by the marines occurred on 19 December as the 5th Battalion repulsed an enemy counterattack killing 187 enemy. The marines remained in a defensive posture at the end of the year.

(C) The Airborne Division made significant progress in its attack westward toward the Thach Han River against elements of the 312th and 325th Divisions. The most significant activity was centered northwest of FSB Anne where a series of coordinated attacks cut enemy escape routes and

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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 4.5

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A VNAF A-27 releases two 500 pound bombs against an enemy target. The bomb fins allow the aircraft to escape damage from its low level bombing run.

resulted in a large amount of enemy equipment being captured. A summary of major items of equipment captured northwest of Anhe included 241 individual weapons, 177 crew-served weapons, ten antiaircraft guns, 19 Molotov trucks, nine T-54 tanks, and three artillery pieces. Monthly casualty figures included 1,360 enemy killed and 25 captured. The South Vietnamese troops suffered 78 killed and 432 wounded.

(U) In December the Airborne Division initiated a battalion training program consisting of a battalion being moved to a rear area for training classes in small unit tactics and command and control techniques. Following this one week period the battalion moved to the field and applied the techniques learned in the classroom. Part of the success the division achieved during December can be attributed to this training program and the rotation of forward battalions, allowing sufficient time for rest and refitting. The division continued to attack northwestward toward the Thach Han River as 1972 ended.

(C) In Thua Thien Province during December the 1st Division deployment remained unchanged, ranging generally from Bastogne to the Hai Van Pass. Adverse weather hampered operations throughout the month. Activity was restricted to deep patrolling to interdict lines of communication and locate enemy supply points with little success. Contacts through-

out the month were sporadic and minor.

(C) In Quang Nam Province, the 3d Division conducted aggressive patrolling in the Da Nang rocket belt and initiated offensive operations in eastern Dai Loc and the Nui Da Ham area. Adverse weather conditions continued to restrict operations, because much of the lowlands flooded during the month. On 6 December elements of the 56th Regiment repulsed an enemy ground attack at Nui Da Ham. The defense was supported by B-52 strikes, tactical air strikes, and ARVN artillery. By mid-month the 2d Regiment reported light enemy resistance in the Dai Loc District, and its attack was shifted south toward Que Son with no significant contacts reported. On 27 December the 3d Division initiated a two axis attack in the Que Son Valley with the 56th Regiment on the north and the 2d Regiment on the south. On 28 December FSB Center was recaptured, and the attack continued southwest toward Hiep Duc.

(C) In Quang Tin Province activity was light during December. Only two significant contacts were reported. On 9 December the 3d Battalion, 5th Regiment conducted a coordinated ground attack supported by artillery against enemy positions south of Ky Long. During the day 48 enemy were killed and one captured with the ARVN suffering light casualties. The operations was well-planned and aggressively executed. On 10 December a com-

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lined Territorial Force-ARVN operation began on Barrier Island with the commitment of three Regional Force battalions from Quang Tin, two Regional Force battalions from Quang Nam, and one cavalry squadron from the 8d Division. Under the control of the Quang Tin Sector Tactical Command Post, the results of the operation were significant and resulted in the destruction of enemy forces on the island. At the close of the year 110 of the enemy had been killed, while friendly losses were 31 dead. The five Regional Force battalions remained on the island indefinitely and destroyed enemy emplacements and bunker complexes, conducted searches, and constructed permanent outposts. This successful operation highlighted the effectiveness of Territorial Forces in this area. During December approximately 20,000 refugees were returned to Tien Phuoc. This represented about 80 percent of the people who had fled when Tien Phuoc was taken by the enemy in September.

(C) Combat activity in Quang Ngai Province was generally at a low level as South Vietnamese Army and Territorial Forces maintained security of lines of communication and government installations. Elements of the 6th Regiment operated on the Batangan Peninsula, while the 1st Ranger Group operated in western Binh Son and Son Tinh Districts. The 4th Regiment conducted operations in the Duc Pho-San Juan Hill area. On 10 December a combined force of a ranger border defense battalion, an armored cavalry squadron, and the 4th Regiment Reconnaissance Company attacked an enemy position four kilometers northeast of Mo Duc, killing 29 enemy and suffering light casualties. Activity around Mo Duc for the remainder of the month consisted of sporadic light contacts. On 17 December the 1st Ranger Group initiated operations in western Binh Son and Son Tinh Districts. The plan called for two ranger battalions, with two cavalry troops attached, to attack west astride Route 529. A fire support base was established to support the operation. Only light enemy resistance was met and small supply caches were found, as the operation continued into the new year. Sixth Regiment operations on the Batangan Peninsula helped expand government control in that area, although only minor contacts were reported. An indicator of the success of this operation was demonstrated on 28 December when 22 Hoi Chanhs rallied to a Popular Force outpost in that area.

(C) In the marine area of operations activity was light in early January 1973, as enemy counterattacks were repulsed along Phase Line Gold. On 17 January the Marine Division launched an attack toward the Cua Viet River east of Route 560, as part of an I Corps plan for the period preceding the cease-fire. The marines were to seize the area

south of the river while other I Corps units conducted security operations to preclude enemy infiltration into rear areas and populated areas. The marine attack met strong resistance and heavy attacks-by-fire, including an estimated 4,000 rounds of mortar and artillery on 17 January. On 20 January the marines renewed the attack northward with a feint being conducted by units inland along Phase Line Gold. The following morning a main attack was launched along the coast and met heavy enemy resistance. Not until 28 January, the cease-fire day, were the marines able to seize the south bank of the river and hold the position against several enemy counterattacks. The enemy continued to react violently and launched heavy attacks-by-fire and ground attacks against the marine units. On 31 January the marines were overrun and forced to consolidate defensive positions along Phase Line Brown. During this operation from 27 January to 31 January the marines suffered 91 killed, 238 wounded, and 149 missing. Additionally, 24 M-48 tanks, 19 M-41 tanks, and 24 M-113 APCs were destroyed.

(C) In the Airborne Division area combat activity continued to center in the vicinity of the Ton Nhu Le hamlet southwest of Quang Tri City. Enemy elements held this key area, which controlled crossing sites on the Thach Han River. On 10 January Airborne Division elements forced the enemy to withdraw, which gave the division control of approximately ten kilometers of the Thach Han River south bank. On 11 January the 1st Armored Brigade was placed under the operational control of the Airborne Division and assumed responsibility for the southern portion of the division area and part of Route 1. This was the first employment of the 1st Armored Brigade Headquarters since early May 1972. On 13 January Airborne Division elements found 1,000 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition west of FSB Anne while clearing small pockets of enemy resistance. Continued activity consisted of blocking enemy infiltration into the rear areas. During the last four days in January the Airborne Division defended the south bank of the Thach Han River, Route 1, and the populated lowlands, and on 30 January repulsed a two battalion attack.

(C) In Thua Thien Province on 9 January elements of the 3d Regiment, 1st Division conducted a combat assault in support of Territorial Forces constructing four outposts and clearing and repairing portions of Route 554. Significant finds were made by the division on 10 January including two Molotova trucks and one 122mm field gun. Only scattered minor contacts and attacks-by-fire were reported throughout the remainder of the month. On 24 January the 1st Division positioned its forces for a cease-fire with special emphasis on security

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HOI CHANHS are sworn in as Territorial Force volunteers by Huynh Cu, a former NVA lieutenant colonel.

of the populated lowlands south of Hue, in anticipation of an increase in enemy activity. On 28 January, prior to and after the cease-fire, enemy activity consisted of attempts to occupy hamlets and interdict Route 1 in the province. ARVN and Territorial Forces responded well and protected lines of communication and population centers.

(U) During early January Quang Nam officials initiated an all out effort to locate suspected 122mm rockets storage and firing sites. Nine Regional Force companies, 44 Popular Force platoons, National Police, youth groups, and civilians participated in this operation. On the first day of the operation 24 122mm rockets were found.

(C) Meanwhile, the 3d Division continued its attack toward Hiep Duc and seized key terrain in the Quo Son Valley. On 7 January elements of the

division recaptured six 105mm howitzers and five 155mm howitzers, all unserviceable. These were probably the weapons left at FSB Ross when the base was abandoned in September 1972. On 12 January poor weather conditions slowed the attack and resupply was limited to overland means. Renewed attacks were conducted on 13 January, and terrain was secured north and south of the Quo Son Valley approach to Hiep Duc. The 51st Regiment, which had moved from Thua Thien Province on 8 January, conducted a night attack on 16 January and recaptured Fire Support Base West.

(C) Enemy counterattacks on 22 January delayed elements of the 2d and 51st Regiments in their attacks toward Hiep Duc. Units were repositioned on 23 January to renew the attacks; however, the attacks stalled and defensive positions were estab-

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hated. The operation was terminated on 24 January and the 3d Division was deployed with two regiments in the Que Son Valley, one regiment in the Da Nang rocket belt and one regiment as a mobile reserve. The 51st Regiment remained under the operational control of the 3d Division.

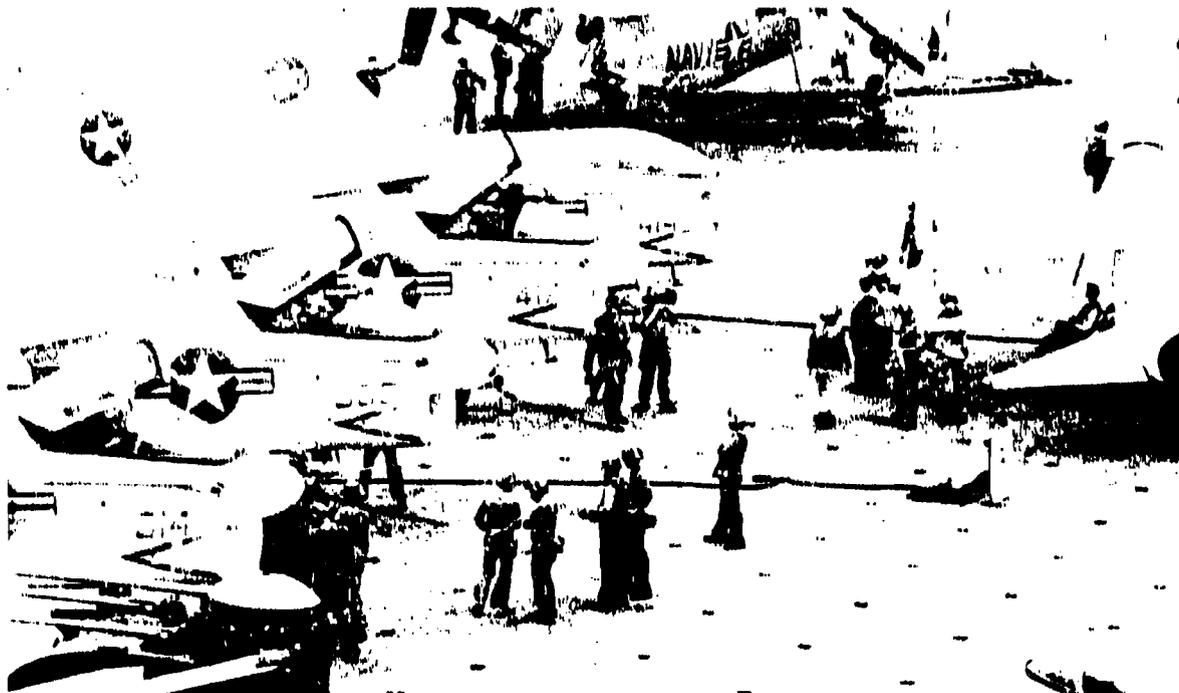
(U) Activity in the province on 28 January consisted of enemy initiated attacks-by-fire against the Da Nang area and attacks-by-fire and ground attacks in the Que Son Valley. These attacks were repulsed and ARVN forces retained the terrain held prior to the cease-fire. Throughout the remainder of the month 3d Division units and Territorial Forces were engaged in clearing enemy elements from the Dal Loc area, and at the end of the month only one hamlet remained contested in that area.

(C) In Quang Tin Province on 5 January, in conjunction with the 3d Division operation in the Que Son Valley, the 5th Regiment occupied blocking positions north of Tien Phuoc. Territorial Forces were also positioned in this area to assist the 5th Regiment in blocking enemy escape routes south of the Que Son Valley. Over a 10-day period the 5th Regiment accounted for 148 enemy killed, 47 weapons captured, and several tons of enemy equipment, ammunition, and foodstuffs captured or destroyed. On 14 January the regiment moved to Tam Ky and on 18 January initiated an operation to the west against light enemy resistance. At the time

of the cease-fire enemy forces attacked outposts west of Tam Ky in an effort to gain control of the area. Territorial Forces were able to hold these outposts and repulse enemy efforts to expand his control.

(C) Significant activity in the northern part of Quang Ngai Province during January consisted of elements of the 1st Ranger Group and 6th Regiment capturing large amounts of enemy food supplies. On 22 January the 1st Ranger Group was relieved of the responsibility for the western portion of the Binh Son-Son Tinh Districts by elements of the 6th Regiment. The rangers moved south to assume the responsibility for operations to retake the Ba To District Town, part of the I Corps pre-cessate-fire plan. The attack was to begin on 23 January, but poor weather conditions and enemy activity stalled the operation until the 27th. Ba To remained in enemy hands on 28 January.

(C) Farther south on the 25th of January a task force from the 4th Regiment initiated an operation to reopen Route 1 between Sa Huynh and the Military Regions 1 and 2 boundary, where a link-up was planned with 22d Division units. The operation progressed well until 27 January, when enemy units launched attacks in the area. By the end of the month the enemy controlled a strip extending from nine kilometers north of Sa Huynh to three kilometers south.



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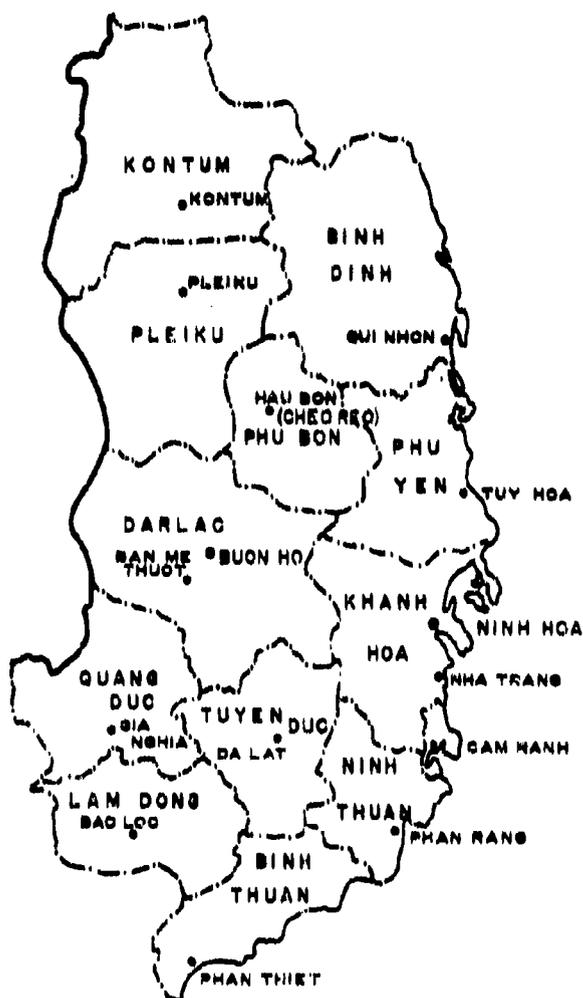
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Seeking the elusive enemy.

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Source: MACDI

Figure: 4-6

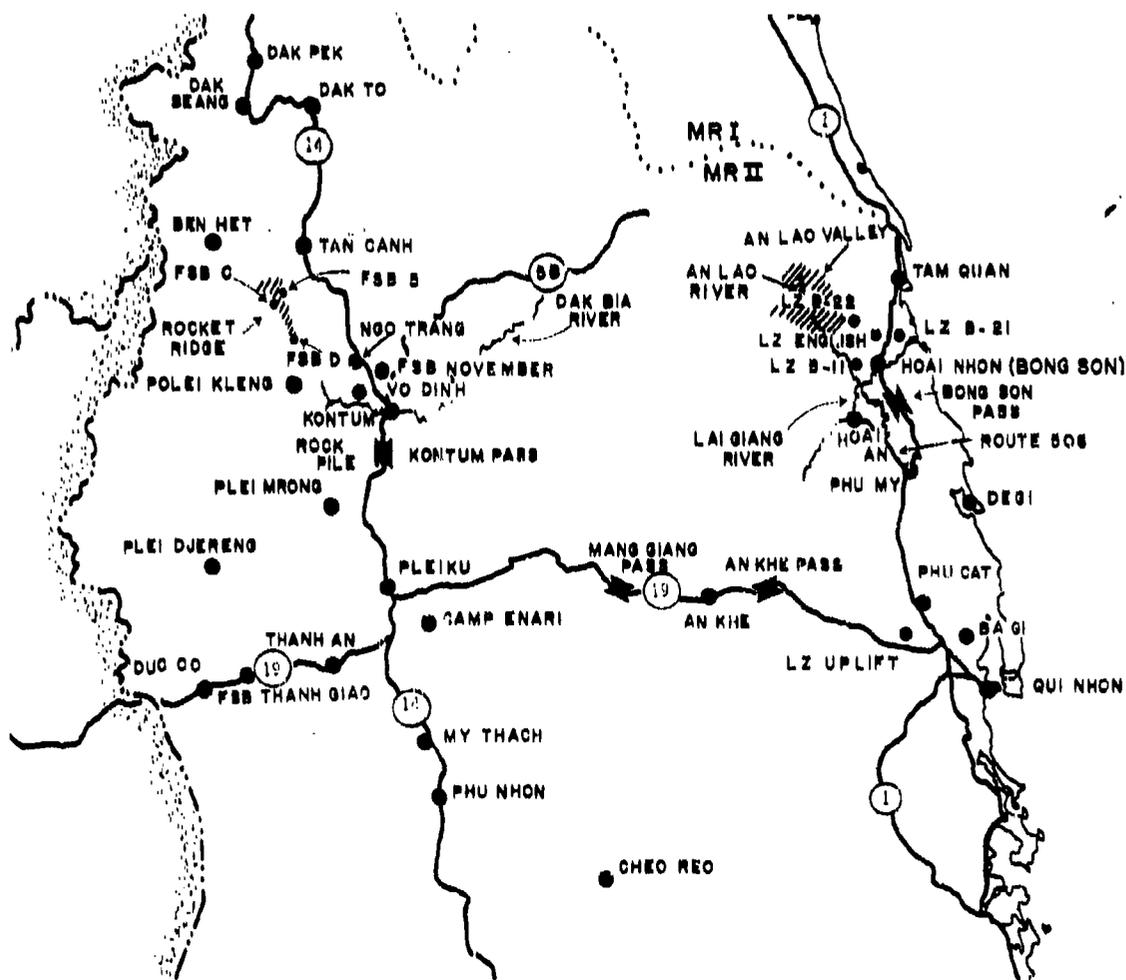
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ember. The following day the 45th Regiment, supported by 28 sorties of VNAF tactical air and B-52 strikes, launched their attack astride Route 19 to the west. By month's end a II Corps tactical command post had moved to Thanh An to control the operation, and on 30 November an infantry company was combat assaulted into landing zones west of the attacking forces. The company's mission was to secure the area and screen the advance of the attacking battalions. The area selected was to serve as a fire support base for the continuation of the attack to regain Duc Co.

(C) At the start of November combat activity in northern Binh Dinh Province was reported at the same low level that had been experienced during the latter half of October. Light contacts by 22d Division elements were reported in the vicinity of Tam Quan and west of Bong Son. On 5 November the 40th Regiment completed an 11 day operation in the Tam Quan area. Total enemy losses during the operation were 76 killed and five prisoners captured. Friendly casualties were 15 killed and 61 wounded. Division elements returned to Route 1 and prepared for a five-to-seven day operation east-southeast of Hoai An, which commenced on 10 November with the combat assault of two 40th Regiment battalions into a landing zone seven kilometers southeast of Hoai An. Heavy rains restricted ground movement during most of the month, and the Hoai An operation yielded only minor results. On 22 November the 41st Regiment with two battalions deployed from Binh Dinh to Pleiku to reinforce

mission elements were reported in the vicinity of Tam Quan and west of Bong Son. On 5 November the 40th Regiment completed an 11 day operation in the Tam Quan area. Total enemy losses during the operation were 76 killed and five prisoners captured. Friendly casualties were 15 killed and 61 wounded. Division elements returned to Route 1 and prepared for a five-to-seven day operation east-southeast of Hoai An, which commenced on 10 November with the combat assault of two 40th Regiment battalions into a landing zone seven kilometers southeast of Hoai An. Heavy rains restricted ground movement during most of the month, and the Hoai An operation yielded only minor results. On 22 November the 41st Regiment with two battalions deployed from Binh Dinh to Pleiku to reinforce



Source: MACMH3

Figure 4-7

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ARVN units in the Thanh An area. Flooding continued through the end of the month; however, on 29 November the 22d Division began another operation near Hoai An as 47th Regiment units moved into the area, reporting no contact as the month ended. In southern Binh Dinh Province on 1 November Vietnamese forces relieved Korean forces of the security responsibility for Route 19 from the An Khe Pass to the Mang Giang Pass. No activity was reported in the area until 29 November, when a large truck convoy was ambushed in the An Khe Pass. ARVN and Korean forces reacted and by the next day traffic was moving between Qui Nhon and Pleiku.

(C) Throughout the month Territorial Forces conducted operations in the southern provinces. A corps-wide DONG KHOI operation which began on 2 October was terminated on 11 November. Enemy losses were 1,433 killed, 78 captured, 80 returnees and Hoi Chanhs, and 692 Viet Cong infrastructure personnel captured. RVNAF casualties were 169 killed, 430 wounded, and 21 missing. A ten-day DONG KHOI was terminated on 30 November, resulting in 321 enemy killed, 13 prisoners, and 34 Hoi Chanhs. Friendly casualties were 26 killed, 61 wounded, and two missing.

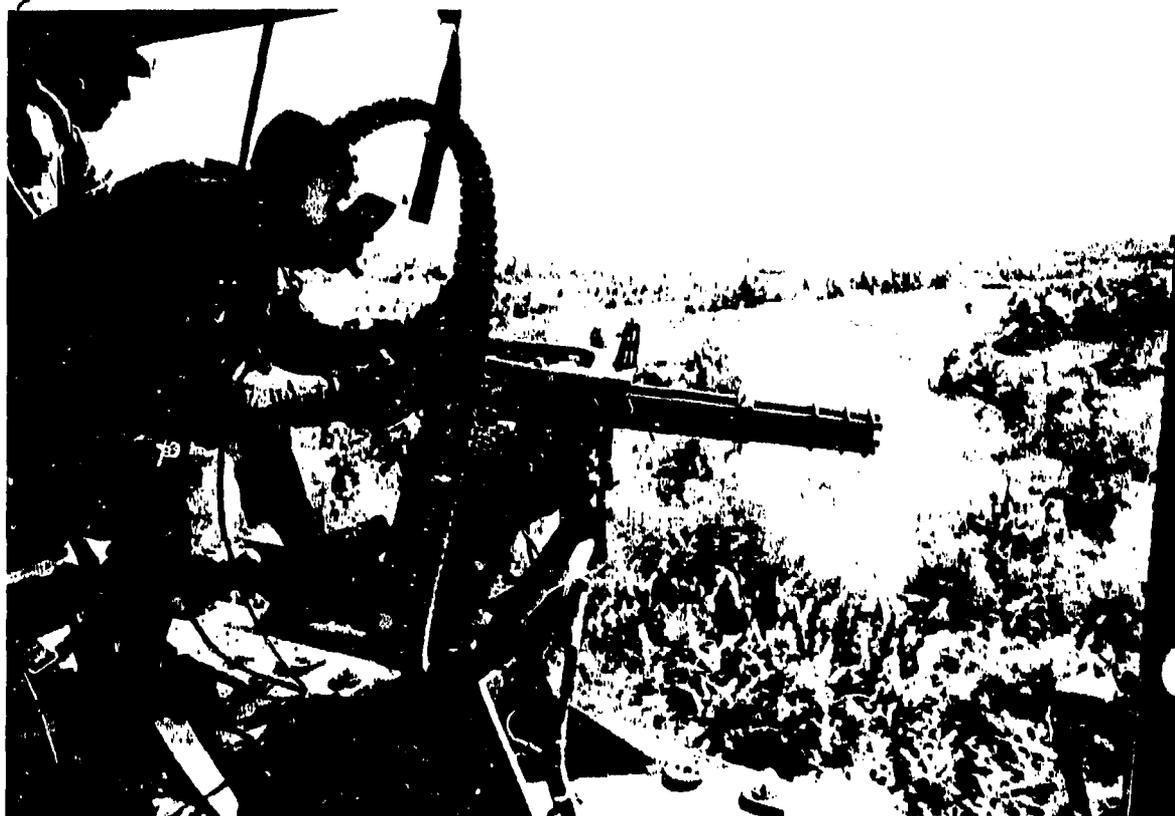
(C) In Kontum Province combat activity was at low level during December. The attack astride Route 14 by the 44th Regiment, 23d Division north of Kontum toward Vo Dinh, which began on 29 November, continued with slight progress, as lead elements and the regimental command post continued to receive attacks-by-fire. Heavy USAF tactical air support produced 19 secondary explosions and seven secondary fires in the area on 4 December. The 44th Regiment inflicted heavy casualties on 320th NVA Division elements while repulsing several attacks. On 5 December two battalions of the 44th Regiment withdrew in small groups under enemy pressure to FSB November. On 6 December additional ARVN forces were moved from Pleiku to Kontum to reinforce the attack toward Vo Dinh. A battalion of the 53d Regiment and a ranger reconnaissance company combat assaulted into landing zones in the Vo Dinh area. ARVN artillery provided good support despite enemy attacks-by-fire on the artillery positions. By 9 December elements of the battalion were temporarily in the city of Vo Dinh and reported contact with small enemy elements. The battalion was then withdrawn to Kontum for rest and resupply before returning to the Vo Dinh area. The 53d Regiment replaced the 44th Regiment and renewed the attack north on 11 December as the 44th Regiment assumed responsibility for Route 14 south of Kontum. US air cavalry units screened the movement north and reported light engagements with small enemy elements. Additionally, a battalion and a reconnais-

sance company were combat assaulted into landing zones two kilometers south of Vo Dinh to reinforce the attack. USAF and VNAF aircraft supported the operation with good results. Through the remainder of the month the operation continued with sporadic contacts. At month's end activity was centered around FSB November northwest of Kontum with friendly forces in control of the area.

(C) In Pleiku Province the attack toward Duc Co which began in November continued on 1 December, as II Corps moved a tactical command post to Thanh An. In conjunction with the western movement of two 45th Regiment battalions, an infantry company combat assaulted into three landing zones approximately ten kilometers east of Duc Co to secure the area for a fire support base and to screen the advance of the battalions. As efforts continued to establish the fire support base, long range reconnaissance patrol teams and a reconnaissance company were inserted into the Duc Co area on 3 December. On the morning of the 5th, elements of the 22d Division Reconnaissance Company reported contact with elements of the 48th and 64th Regiments, 320th NVA Division following a combat assault into the Duc Co area. A battalion of the 41st Regiment was combat assaulted into an area two kilometers north of the Duc Co ranger camp on 5 December. Following a visit by MG Toan, the II Corps commander, to the corps tactical command post at Thanh An on 2 December, four 175mm guns were moved to a position south of Pleiku and four 155mm howitzers were moved to the fire support base west of Thanh Giao. Additionally, a ranger battalion was moved two kilometers west of Thanh Giao and a cavalry squadron to Thanh Giao as reinforcements for the operation. Contacts by the 41st and 45th Regiments with the 48th and 64th Regiments' elements were frequent as the attack progressed. B-52 strikes, as well as ARVN artillery, and USAF and VNAF tactical aircraft and gunships, supported the operation. Movement toward the objective was enhanced by the frequent use of airmobile operations. On 12 December the remaining battalion of the 41st Regiment arrived in Thanh An, completing the relocation of the regiment from Binh Dinh. By 14 December elements of the 41st Regiment, supported by armored cavalry, reached positions two kilometers east of Duc Co, although they were subjected to attacks-by-fire and a ground attack. On 17 December the 41st Regiment command post was moved forward to strengthen command and control of the forces in the Duc Co area. Activity subsided in the Thanh An-Duc Co area by 19 December, as the rangers continued to make good use of tactical air support against known and suspected enemy positions. 41st Regiment elements repulsed an enemy attack three

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A VNAF airman opens fire on an enemy position with his minigun.

kilometers east of Duc Co with the support of artillery and gunships. On 24 December 41st Regiment elements found a cache of approximately seven tons of munitions, including 100 122mm rockets, one-half kilometer east of Duc Co. ARVN units operating near the Duc Co camp perimeter on 21 December directed 18 VNAF sorties against suspected enemy positions with good results, while sustaining only light friendly casualties. Numerous light contacts with the 48th and 64th Regiments were reported the following day as elements of the 41st Regiment, supported by artillery, maneuvered toward the old ranger camp. By 1400 hours 21 December all enemy resistance had been eliminated and ARVN units occupied the camp. During the final day's drive, over 50 enemy were killed, and 30 weapons were captured. Additionally, body finds in the area accounted for over 100 enemy dead, probably as a result of the B-52 strikes conducted west of Duc Co on 16 December. During the remainder of the month only light and sporadic enemy contact was reported in the province.

(C) In Binh Dinh Province adverse weather in early December continued to restrict movement as the 47th Regiment operation south of Hoai An, which began on 29 November, made slow progress without contact. Contact remained light until 7 December when elements of the 47th Regiment reported the first significant contact five kilometers east-southeast of Hoai An. Following a combat assault into the area on 6 December, the 47th Reconnaissance Company joined elements of a battalion on the ground and assaulted 3d NVA Division positions inflicting moderate losses on the enemy. ARVN artillery and USAF aircraft supported as ground forces secured the position. The arrival of Typhoon Therese further hampered combat operations as sporadic contacts continued, with friendly forces receiving light attacks-by-fire. As the 47th Regiment operation continued, elements of the 40th Regiment operated along Route 1 near Landing Zone English and Tam Quan, while 42d Regiment units worked the An Lao Valley area and west of Hoai An without significant contact.

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Although overall activity continued at a low level, two ARVN units executed two successful night raids on enemy locations west and southwest of Hoai An during the early morning hours of 18 December, killing 12 enemy while sustaining no friendly losses. Late on 18 December and again on the 19th, 47th Regiment elements, supported by artillery and tactical aircraft, reported contacts east of Hoai An with moderate casualties reported on both sides. Territorial Forces operating south and east of Phu My also reported contacts on the 18th and 19th and repulsed two enemy ground probes with no significant casualties resulting. Between 20 and 26 December, only light, scattered contacts were reported by Territorial Forces. A Korean ambush north of Phu Cat had good results on the 23d. On the 27th elements of the 47th Regiment, supported by artillery, made another significant contact southeast of Hoai An and inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy while suffering only light losses. ARVN artillery was credited with most of the enemy casualties. During the remaining days of the month combat activity remained light, with a slight increase in friendly initiated actions reported by the 22d Division in the northern portion of the province.

(C) In the southern provinces throughout December Territorial Forces conducted operations. On 6 December People's Self Defense Force and Popular Force defenders successfully stopped an enemy attack on a hamlet in Darlac Province until reinforced by a Regional Force company. Elsewhere only light and sporadic activity was reported in Phu Yen, Binh Thuan, and Lam Dong Provinces until 20 December. On that date Regional Forces in Phu Yen Province, supported by territorial artillery and VNAF tactical aircraft, killed over 30 enemy in two contacts southwest of Tuy Hoa with no friendly losses. Minor contacts were also reported in Darlac and Lam Dong Provinces. Security provided by the Territorial Forces during December was adequate, and the introduction of regular forces was not necessary.

(C) During the first week in January ARVN forces initiated only limited ground operations following the Christmas holiday cease-fire. The situation around FSB November, which had been tenuous in late December, stabilized as the 23d Division deployed reinforcements to the area from the vicinity of Thanh An in Pleiku Province. The drive north to place Vo Dinh under government control made little progress because the ARVN units appeared unable to organize and sustain an offensive. Farther south, Route 14 between Kontum and Pleiku remained interdicted until 6 January. Reinforcements were deployed to assist the rangers in the road clearing operations. Elsewhere

in the region combat operations were limited to the security of lines of communication and government controlled population centers. Territorial Forces reported a slight increase in enemy activity; however, they reacted well, and no areas were lost to the enemy.

(C) The area north of Kontum City became the focal point of activity in the Military Region at the beginning of the second week. The region's Senior Advisor, BG Michael D. Healy, assessed the primary threat as a suspected enemy attempt to attack and seize Kontum City prior to the cease-fire. Fresh troops from the 44th Regiment and additional artillery, including eight 105mm howitzers, four 155mm howitzers, and four 175mm guns, were moved to the fire support bases north of the city. On 8 and 9 January an intensive B-52 program was conducted against suspected enemy troop locations, base areas, and logistical storage areas. A total of 28 B-52 strikes were flown and probably accounted for the low level of enemy activity which followed. After the air strikes and ground operations to the north of Kontum City, the anticipated enemy attack failed to materialize. Route 14 between Kontum and Pleiku was interdicted as enemy elements, probably from the 95B Regiment, 10th NVA Division, destroyed a culvert. Quick reaction by ARVN elements restored the route within the day, and military convoys and civilian traffic experienced only a slight delay. Along the coast, in the 22d Division area, the Republic of Korea forces area, and the southern provinces secured by Territorial Forces, combat activity was at a very low level. Near Hoai An, in the Crescent Mountain area, elements of the 22d Division cleared an extensive enemy bunker complex on 12 January and casualties were reported as light. In the southern portion of the region numerous small engagements were reported as Territorial Forces continued to successfully destroy local VC elements and locate supply caches.

(C) Combat activity remained at a low level the following week. Activity in Kontum and Pleiku Provinces was characterized by a shifting of units as the cease-fire appeared imminent. The Corps Commander deployed his forces to protect the high density population centers and highways in the Highlands, in case the enemy attempted to seize these areas immediately preceding the anticipated cease-fire. The most significant moves involved the deployment of most of the ARVN forces from the Duc Co Border Ranger Camp area to Thanh An and Pleiku City. By week's end only one ranger border defense battalion remained in the Duc Co area. One of the companies was in the camp proper and the remainder of the battalion took up field positions on the high ground near the camp. The

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41st Regiment, with elements of the 21st Tank Regiment, remained in the Thanh An area with elements positioned along Route 14 south of Camp Enari. Route 14 between Kontum and Pleiku continued to be open to both civilian and military traffic; however, vehicles traveling the route were sporadically subjected to harassing fire. The 41st Regiment, which was one of the units withdrawn from the Duc Co area after the camp had been secured, was redeployed to Binh Dinh Province along the coast to rejoin the 22d Division. Other elements of the division continued to operate in the Crescent Mountains, east of Hoai An. Although no major engagements were noted in the operation, in the first 18 days over 270 enemy were reported killed, while friendly casualties were light.

(C) Between 21 and 24 January activity increased in the area north of Kontum City as the cease-fire announcement was awaited. Still concerned over a threat of Kontum, the 23d Division reinforced north of the city with a battalion of the 45th Regiment which combat assaulted into landing zones northeast of Vo Dinh on 24 January. The same day B-52 strikes again struck targets north of the city. This series of strikes, combined with the strikes on the 19th, resulted in 24 separate targets struck and produced 48 secondary explosions. Also on 24 January a battalion of the 44th Regiment combat assaulted into landing zones southwest of Vo Dinh. A fire support base was established along Route 14 two kilometers east of Ngo Trang with two 105mm howitzers for support of the three battalions operating in the Vo Dinh area. In Pleiku Province the ranger company occupying the Duc Co Border Ranger Camp was forced to withdraw after extensive attacks-by-fire and ground attacks. US Spectre and VNAF Spooky gunships, US Army Cobras, and USAF and VNAF TACAIR supported the defenders. The ranger company withdrew to positions along Route 10 approximately nine kilometers east of the camp; the ranger elements east and northeast of the camp maintained their positions. II Corps moved an additional infantry battalion to Thanh An to prevent any possible enemy drives farther east and the corps tactical command post remained at the district town to control operations in the area. In Binh Dinh Province the 40th Regiment conducted operations near Tam Quan. The 41st Regiment continued operations near Houi

Nhon; the 47th Regiment operated in the Crescent Mountain area and located a 20 ton cache of rice. In the southern provinces activity increased, and ARVN elements reinforced the Territorial Forces in Binh Thuan Province on 22 January, as the corps detected a threat developing in the Phan Thiet area. Three destroyers were deployed to stations off the southern coast to provide naval gunfire support to forces operating in Binh Thuan Province. The ROK forces prepared for standdown on 20 January for future redeployment to Korea. Since combat forces in the region were spread thin, a ranger group with two battalions began moving from Military Region 1 on 27 January to provide government presence in the Korean area prior to the cease-fire.

(C) As the cease-fire approached the enemy actions were characterized by hamlet infiltration, highway interdiction, stand-off attacks, and limited ground attacks generally focused on Territorial Forces. In the 23d Division area the forces north of Kontum City were subjected to stand-off attacks, and a bridge approximately nine kilometers north of the city was damaged and traffic disrupted. Pleiku was isolated from ground resupply as Route 10 was interdicted west of the Mang Giang Pass. North of the city Route 14 was cut on the Kontum-Pleiku Province boundary. Pleiku City was subjected to repeated attacks of 122mm rockets on 28 January, but the intensity of fire was low, and little damage was reported. To the south of the city along Route 14 in northern Darlac Province, several hamlets were entered by the enemy. Territorial Forces were unable to return the hamlets to government control prior to the cease-fire. Along the coast the pattern of activity was the same. Route 1 was interdicted between Hoai An and Tam Quan in Binh Dinh Province. Four bridges were damaged or destroyed, and six hamlets infiltrated in northern Phu Yen Province. In Lam Dong Province Route 20 was interdicted and a hamlet infiltrated near the Tuyen Duc Province boundary. ARVN and Territorial Forces reacted to all of the enemy activity; however, all highways remained interdicted and several hamlets remained contested at month's end. Enemy cease-fire violations were at a high level, but other than the limited hamlet infiltrations, no significant ground was lost to the enemy.

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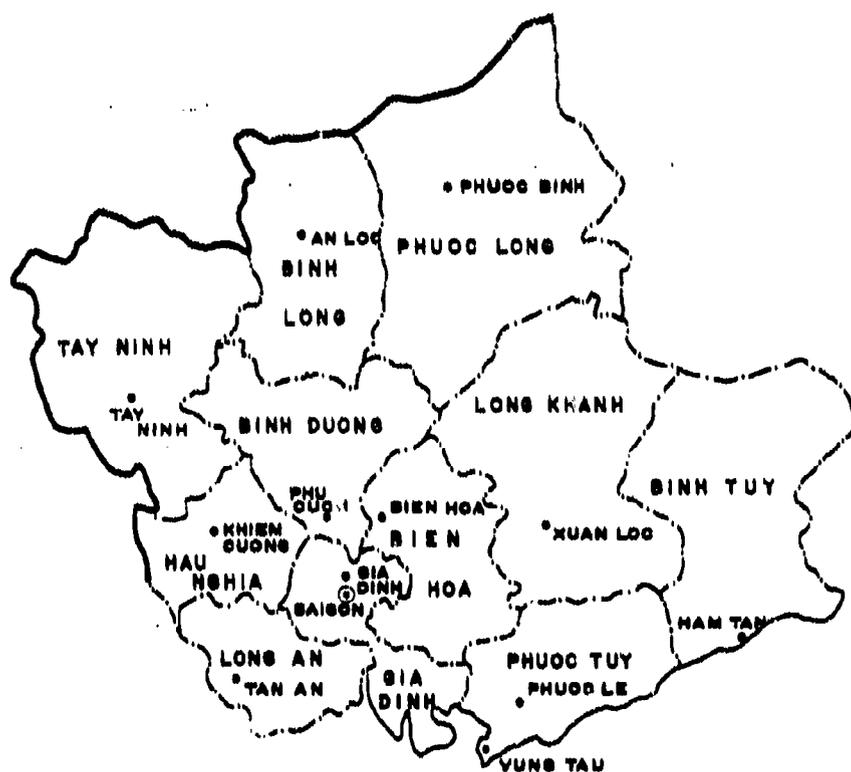
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ARVN Rangers help a captured NVA soldier to an aid station.

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Source: MACDI

Figure: 4-8

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MILITARY REGION 3

(C) In November, III Corps generally maintained a defensive posture while shifting divisional units in such a way that essentially they occupied areas of responsibility approximating those existing when the NGUYEN HUE Offensive began in early April (Fig. 4-8). The first unit move in III Corps' redeployment of forces took place on 5 November when elements of the 8th Regiment, 5th Division deployed from Chon Thanh, Binh Long Province to the vicinity of Lai Khe in Binh Duong Province. The return of the 25th Division to Hau Nghia and Tay Ninh Provinces started on 7 November, when the 2d Battalion, 50th Regiment and the regimental command post moved to Hau Nghia Province. The 25th Division was fully deployed in the two provinces at the end of the month. On 20 November the relief of the 18th Division at An Loc commenced with ranger battalions replacing the division maneuver units. By 29 November the relief was completed, and the 18th Division had redeployed to Long Khanh, Bien Hoa, and southern Binh Duong Provinces. A light command post from the Ranger Command assumed control of the 8d, 5th, and 6th Ranger Groups at An Loc. Total forces were nine ranger battalions.

(U) One major engagement occurred at An Loc on 2 November between the 48d Regiment and an estimated regiment from the 9th NVA Division. In this day-long battle 192 enemy were killed, and friendly losses were five killed and 25 wounded.

(C) In December III Corps remained in a basic defensive posture with limited short range offensive operations. The major units remained in the tactical areas of responsibility established in November and generally conducted local operations with minor results. On 4 December the 25th Division conducted a clearing operation along the Saigon River south of Tri Tam but failed to make contact with the enemy (Fig. 4-9). On the same day the 18th Division commenced a two-day reconnaissance in force operation south of Black Horse in Long Khanh Province that terminated with negative results. On 10 December the 25th Division started a two-battalion sweep operation in the Hobo Woods area and along the Saigon River. The 5th Division, in coordination with the 25th Division, began a two-battalion operation east of the river west of Ben Cat.

(C) On 11 December in Tay Ninh Province the 51st Regional Force Group, acting on information from a Hoi Chanh, made contact with possible elements of the D2 Battalion, C50 Regiment and killed 79 enemy. US and VNAF tactical air support was employed. Friendly losses were three wounded. On the same day the 18th Division conducted a coordinated airmobile and ground operation north-

east of Trang Bom in Bien Hoa Province. The objective of the operation was to make contact with elements of the 33d NVA Regiment. However, there was no contact.

(C) On 15 December the 25th Division moved a battalion to Bao Trai in Hau Nghia Province. The battalion began a sweep operation north and west of Duc Hoa in response to increased enemy activity in that area. No major contact was made.

(C) On 16 December ARVN forces began an eight-battalion operation in the Bien Hoa rocket belt, following rocket attacks on Bien Hoa Air Base. Five 122mm rockets were captured, and several minor contacts made near launch positions.

(C) On 27 December III Corps initiated a coordinated attack into the Saigon River corridor employing elements of the 5th and 25th Divisions. To the east of the Saigon River, three battalions of the 5th Division attacked into the Iron Triangle. On the west of the river four battalions of the 25th Division attacked towards the Hobo Woods with objectives near the river. The attack made moderate progress against light resistance. On 30 December the attack swung generally north along the river toward Tri Tam.

(U) The month of January, except for the last week, was a stable period in Military Region 3. The Saigon River Corridor operation in southern Binh Long, northern Binh Duong, and eastern Tay Ninh Provinces produced the most significant enemy contacts. During the first week of January, elements of the 25th Division operating in the Boi Loi Woods in southern Tay Ninh Province were harassed by enemy attacks-by-fire but reported no significant contacts. A regiment of the 5th Division, operating north of Lai Khe, had the same results. On 4 January a battalion of the 18th Division engaged an estimated enemy battalion northeast of Trang Bom, near Bien Hoa. Following reinforcement by another battalion, contact was broken, with light casualties on both sides. On 5 January the 7th Regiment cleared the road from Phuoc Vinh to Dong Xoai in Phuoc Long Province to permit convoy traffic from Phuoc Vinh to Song Be. The convoy operation halted temporarily on 6 January when a southbound vehicle hit a mine northeast of Dong Xoai. The operation then continued without interruption and terminated as scheduled on 9 January. This was the first operation of this type to reach Phuoc Vinh in a year. Over 1,000 tons of supplies were delivered to Song Be. In addition, numerous civilian vehicles (65 in the first convoy) tagged along, carrying miscellaneous wares.

(C) During the period 10 to 20 January the Saigon River Corridor operation progressed well. Friendly elements reached Tri Tam on 11 January,

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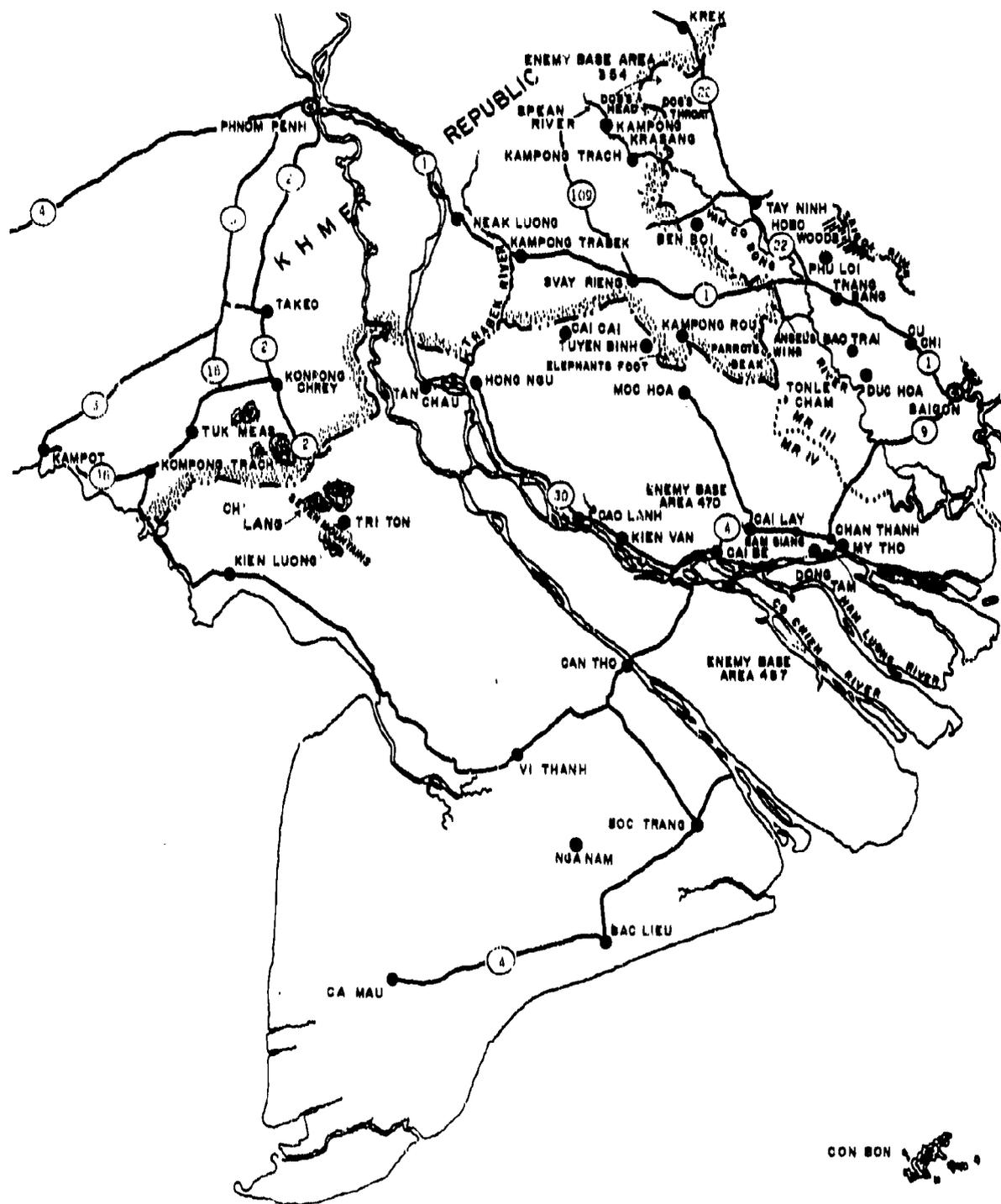
Son Nhut Air Base received 33 122mm rockets on 28 January. One American was killed at Bien Hoa, one civilian was killed and 20 injured at Tan Son Nhut.

(U) After the cease-fire became effective at 0800 hours, 28 January, enemy incidents continued in a definite pattern. Tay Ninh City and northern Hau Nghia Province were focal points of cease-fire violations until the end of the month. Violations were characterized by hamlet infiltration, attacks-by-fire, and lines of communication interdiction. Immediately following the cease-fire, violations occurred generally through the center of the corps area, from Tay Ninh City through northern Hau Nghia and southern Binh Duong Provinces, and along Route 1 to the east. For one day emphasis

shifted to hamlet infiltration in provinces surrounding the Capital Military District. On the last day of the month violations had decreased and again shifted to hamlet infiltration along Routes 1 and 22. The northern provinces remained relatively quiet during the post cease-fire period. The only terrorist activity known to have occurred in the region after the cease-fire occurred during the night of 28-30 January. Both the hamlet chief and assistant hamlet chief of Trung Nhi Hamlet in Binh Duong Province were assassinated. During the last few hours of January, reports indicated that activity in Tay Ninh Province had stabilized; all Military Region 8 hamlets were under friendly control except for 18 hamlets along Route 1 northeast of Trang Bang in Hau Nghia Province.



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Source: MACMHB

Figure: 4-11

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increased in number and intensity and were concentrated in Kien Phong and Dinh Tuong Provinces. There were five significant contacts in Dinh Tuong and three in Kien Phong on the 17th that accounted for the majority of the 204 total enemy killed in Military Region 4 that day. On the 19th a large number of small contacts throughout the region accounted for 195 enemy killed.

(C) On 21 December IV Corps started a combined operation with Khmer forces to open Route 2 from the Vietnamese border north to Takeo. The 14th ARVN Regiment attacked astride Route 2 on the 21st and on the 22d two ARVN ranger battalions air assaulted into the area of Konpong Chrey. Khmer forces followed the ARVN to assume responsibility for security. On the 23d of December the Vietnamese linked up with Khmer units south of Takeo. No significant contact was reported during the operation. IV Corps deployed its forces east and west of the road and provided area security for Khmer units conducting road and bridge repair.

(C) Combat activity in the Delta during January was characterized by widely scattered small meeting engagements interspersed with periods of virtually no activity. Resupply constituted the major enemy activity and many contacts were reported with elements engaged in resupply activity. During the first two days of the month, enemy activity was at the lowest level in nine months. For the next five days enemy activity increased sharply as he took advantage of the low lunar illumination. During the night of 8 January four bridges were blown in Chuong Thien Province, three in Vinh Binh Province and one in Phong Dinh Province. Thirty-seven light attacks-by-fire were also reported. Although the enemy was successful in destroying several bridges, commerce and communication were not critically hampered. The enemy paid a high price for his increased activity. The enemy killed average was 140 a day for the first 10 days of the month. Friendly casualties during the same period were comparatively light. An on-going DONG KHOI operation also produced small,

friendly-initiated contacts throughout the military region.

(C) During the period 8 to 10 January, enemy activity declined. A bridge on Route 4 in Ea Rayen Province was blown on 10 January. Repair of the bridge was a difficult and lengthy process; however, a Bailey bridge was used as an expedient, and the traffic flow was restored within one day. During the period 11 to 20 January, activity continued to focus around Chuong Thien Province. Elements of the 31st Regiment made contact with an estimated enemy regiment on 13 January and were successful in maintaining sporadic contact for the next several days. Numerous other smaller contacts were made throughout the military region, attributed mainly to a corps-wide DONG KHOI operation which began on 15 January. This operation was scheduled to end on 18 January but was extended three days because of its initial success. On 21 January, when the operation ended, over 500 of the enemy had been killed, with moderate friendly casualties.

(C) During 21 to 24 January enemy activity was light and widely scattered with Chuong Thien Province, the Tri-Border area, and the Seven Mountains region having the most significant combat activity. After the cease-fire announcement on 28 January, enemy activity throughout the Delta increased significantly and was directed at villages, territorial outposts, and ARVN base areas and outposts. Friendly forces were actively patrolling and responding to enemy initiatives. Just prior to the cease-fire agreement signing, and for the remainder of the month, the preponderance of enemy activity occurred in Chuong Thien Province, and along the Khmer border in Chau Doc and Kien Phong Provinces. Other activity in the military region was widely scattered and of less intensity. By the last day of the month the situation had started to stabilize. Government officials reported an absence of enemy initiatives against primary lines of communication, and with the exception of a few short-term interdictions, all roads and canals remained open to traffic.



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Vietnamese express their gratitude at a Tan Son Nhut departure ceremony.

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CHAPTER 5

THE LAST SIXTY-ONE DAYS:

28 JANUARY - 29 MARCH 1973

(U) On 27 January, OPLAN J-215 was designated OPORD J-215, with implementation to begin concurrently with the cease-fire. When the cease-fire hour arrived, 0800 hours, Sunday, 28 January 1973, the countdown began.

(U) The new agencies, US Support Activities Group (USSAG) and Defense Attache Office (DAO), formed to carry on the residual MACV activities, were organized and activated, the DAO on 28 January and USSAG on 13 February. Similarly, the US Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Commission, was activated on 28 January, and activities were underway to initiate its functions. The MACV staff and agencies personnel began the tasks of terminating or turning over functions and programs to the Vietnamese or to the US residual agencies and of drawing down and closing out the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam within 60 days. While effecting the drawdown, MACV personnel supported the FPJMC and the ICCS with men and materiel, including aviation assets, to assist in implementing the cease-fire. Close control of the US troop redeployment was required because the rate of withdrawal was tied directly to the release of US prisoners held throughout Southeast Asia.

(U) When COUNTDOWN began, nearly 59,000 US and Free World personnel remained in Vietnam, including 23,000 Americans, 35,000 Koreans, and slightly over one hundred others from Thailand, the Philippines, and the Republic of China. With the exception of those US personnel comprising the US Delegation, FPJMC, the redeployment was completed on 29 March--on the 61st day after the cease-fire. While it had been planned to complete the redeployment within 60 days, difficulties concerning the release of US prisoners caused significant changes in the US troop redeployment schedule throughout the two month period. The fourth and final US increment departed Saigon within a 72-hour period on 27, 28, and 29 March, as the last group of prisoners was released in increments and flown out of Hanoi.

(U) Because the withdrawal of other Free World forces was not tied to the prisoner releases, their withdrawals proceeded as planned. The majority of the Korean troops had completed their departure from Nha Trang, Phu Cat, and Saigon by 14 March; small Korean and Chinese elements remained in Saigon until 23 and 26 March, respectively.

(U) The US Delegation, Four Party Joint Mil-

itary Commission (FPJMC), was established in the MACV headquarters building with MG Gilbert H. Woodward the chief US delegate. The commission provided the vehicle for establishing effective communications between the US, South Vietnamese, North Vietnamese, and Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) and for negotiating and settling matters concerning the implementation of specific provisions of the Paris agreement and protocols. An important issue for the US Delegation was to ensure that the release of US PWs was proportional to the withdrawal of US forces. In March the redeployment of the third and fourth increments was suspended and delayed when problems arose over prisoner releases. The US steadfastly maintained its established position and reinstated troop withdrawals only after the PW releases resumed.

(U) The central FPJMC proved an effective organization; however, the field structure, intended to implement and supervise the cease-fire, never fully developed. While the US and South Vietnamese field elements deployed to each site, the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong did not, citing inadequate facilities and the lack of security, immunities, and privileges as their reasons. A total cease-fire did not take effect, and the FPJMC allied task of detecting and reporting violations was impossible because of the Communist failure to deploy field teams.

(U) A final FPJMC task was the establishment of a Four Party Joint Military Team (FPJMT), which would remain in Vietnam to resolve the status of missing Americans and assist in the recovery of the deceased remains interred in Communist controlled areas.

(U) The members of the four delegations began redeploying during the last week in March and the final US members departed Saigon on 31 March. At 1900 hours, 31 March, the US Delegation was disestablished.

(S) The US Support Activities Group (USSAG) was the new headquarters organized to establish command arrangements outside of Vietnam to control residual US missions and responsibilities in Southeast Asia, including the capability to resume air and naval support in South Vietnam, Laos, and the Khmer Republic, and military action against North Vietnam. Headquarters, USSAG was activated at Nakhon Phanom on 10 February under

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the command of GEN John W. Vogt, Jr, USAF, the Deputy COMUSMACV. The headquarters had been organized and staffed, principally with MACV headquarters personnel, during the three months planning preceding the cease-fire. A three phased deployment began on 29 January when a small advance echelon moved from Saigon to Nakhon Phanom. The main body began deploying on 10 February to meet an operational ready date of the 15th. The remaining personnel moved during the following 45 days as they completed and terminated their MACV functions. A dual air operations capability existed at MACV and USSAG from 10 through 14 February. At 0800 hours, 15 February COMUSMACV's command and control of the air war was transferred to COMUSSAG, along with other designated functions. With the disestablishment of MACV on 29 March, operational command of the Defense Attache Office, Saigon was transferred to USSAG.

(S) The US in-country residual support of RVNAF was assumed by the Defense Attache Office (DAO), Saigon. MG John E. Murray, USA, the MACV Director of Logistics, was appointed Defense Attache, responsible for all Department of Defense activities in Vietnam, with his headquarters in the MACV headquarters building at Tan Son Nhut. The DAO was unique, compared with a typical attache element. Composed of 1,200 civilian and 50 military personnel, its mission was to manage the US military assets and programs remaining in Vietnam, including management, control, and supervision of continued resupply, maintenance, and contractor support.

(U) The procurement of US civilians to man all of the DAO spaces proved a difficult task, which remained incomplete at the end of March. The assignment of personnel on a TDY basis provided an interim solution to initially organize and launch the DAO activities before the MACV military personnel departed. Throughout February and March, as civilians arrived, they were oriented and trained on the job to continue the MACV activities and functions. As the military drawdown progressed, responsibilities were transferred to the DAO elements. On 29 March, with the MACV disestablishment, complete responsibility for residual support of the RVNAF was assumed by the DAO. At that time, operational command of the DAO passed to COMUSSAG at Nakhon Phanom.

(C) The MACV Vietnamization of logistics capability was terminated as the DAO assumed the responsibility for monitoring, advising, and continuing contractor support for ongoing logistics programs. Throughout the preceding fifteen months, civilian contractors and civil service tactical assistants had assumed an increasing portion of the

logistics effort as MACV drewdown; they would continue to cover gaps, mainly in the management and maintenance fields.

(S) The ARVN logistics capability was considered adequate, provided the necessary priority and command emphasis was applied to make the system work. The basis for improved supply management had been established under the RVNAF Automated Materiel Management System (RAMMS). Most supply management was functionalized under the National Materiel Management Agency (NMMA). Central control of the technical service supplies was accomplished by the associated depots at Long Binh and Da Nang. The port operations had been transferred to ARVN; highway and watercraft assets were adequate for their needs. Medical materiel support had developed into the most responsive logistical system in Vietnam. The communications-electronics Vietnamization program exceeded all expectations; the SIMS had developed as a viable joint system with all services sharing its operation, maintenance, and support.

(S) Effective VNAF transportation, supply, and maintenance systems had been developed; however, the lack of management skills and maintenance problems aggravated by the large influx of new aircraft under Project ENHANCE PLUS made extensive civilian contractor support, monitored by the DAO, a continuing effort.

(S) The VNN logistics system had been developed to the point of almost complete self-sufficiency, provided US materiel, repair parts, and technical assistance continued to be provided. Management and training technical personnel were principal areas in which the DAO effort continued.

(U) The retrograde of US cargo proceeded steadily throughout the last 60 days. The last ships sailed from Newport, Da Nang, and Qui Nhon on 28 March. Cargo totalling approximately 151,000 measurement tons was retrograded by sea. An additional 6,000 short tons of cargo was airlifted from Da Nang and Saigon, with the last aircraft departing on 24 March. ROKFV cargo retrograde proceeded from the seaports of Qui Nhon, Newport, and Cam Ranh Bay. Cargo approximating 80,000 measurement tons was redeployed to Korean ports between 28 January and 14 March. The USARV/MACV SUPCOM coordinated and supervised the cargo re-employment for both the US and Korean forces, thus completing the MACV retrograde program.

(U) The MACV staff agencies were involved in terminating functions or transferring them to Vietnamese military and civil agencies and DAO. They also provided orientation and familiarization to incoming civilians from DAO. An important unplanned support function arose when the South Vietnamese

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failed to support the FPJMC with facilities, equipment, and food. At GEN Weyand's direction, these tasks were assumed by MACV staff and field elements. Similar support was provided the ICCS.

(U) On 27 February, CORDS stood down. The Territorial Forces and National Police advisory efforts had terminated on 27 January, on 1 February the war victims and community development efforts had been transferred to USAID. The staff management functions of the headquarters which were retained were transferred to the Office of the Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Field Operations. Former CORDS civilian employees staffed the transferred functions.

(U) With the implementation of the cease-fire, the advisory groups ceased their training and advisory functions, with minor exceptions. Functions not terminated, primarily associated with the maintenance and operation of new equipment, were transferred to DAO.

(U) The termination of the four regional assistance commands severed direct US assistance, influence, and advice to RVNAF field elements throughout Vietnam. Consuls General of the US Embassy assumed the reporting and monitoring of the military situation from the RACs. Originally scheduled to standdown at X+30, support requirements from the FPJMC and the ICCS, coupled with the need to maintain reporting and reduced operational capabilities, caused the RACs to remain operational with minimal staffing until the final 72 hours redeployment period began.

(U) The cease-fire did not bring the hoped-for end to hostilities in South Vietnam. An enemy attempt to grab population and territory just before the cease-fire resulted in several days of widespread fighting throughout the country. By Tet, the 3d of February, the attempts had been

beaten back, but incidents continued at a high rate through February and March despite FPJMC and ICCS protests. President Thieu made appeals to the South Vietnamese to guard against Communist efforts to seize control of villages in the face of increased enemy infiltration. The mood of the South Vietnamese was one of caution and hope, tempered with the realization that hostilities had not ended.

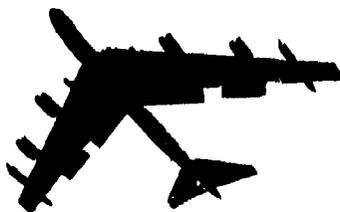
(U) At the beginning of the cease-fire, Communist propaganda was mild as Hanoi and the PRG sought diplomatic recognition from other nations; the NLF asked for observer status at the United Nations. However, by mid-February Hanoi was accusing the South of conducting massive military operations and repressive police actions, abetted by the US. Hanoi's continued buildup in Laos, the Khmer Republic, and South Vietnam belied their claims of adhering to the Paris agreement. Only at Khe Sanh were they forced to remove missiles brought in after the cease-fire.

(U) Stagnation of the economy continued in the cease-fire period as investors and consumers remained cautious. As expected, prices rose just before the Tet holiday, but did not decline substantially afterward. The cease-fire had not brought about hoped-for resumption of the rubber and logging activities. The Republic continued to institute control measures, restricting imports in March. On balance, the wait and see attitude evident since November continued to prevail, as investment commitments and consumer purchases of durables continued to be deferred. Significant economic revival through expanded credit, renewed investment, stock and inventory replenishment, increased import licensing, and resurgent consumer demand would be forthcoming only when the political situation clarified and the business community was willing to invest capital in long term projects.

AIR OPERATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

(C) US air operations in South Vietnam ceased at 0800 hours 28 January 1973 when the cease-fire began. US operations continued on a limited scale in Laos and the Khmer Republic in response to specific requests of those governments. Targeting

for these strikes, which included B-52 and TACAIR, included close air support and an interdiction effort, principally in Laos. On 15 February MACV relinquished the control of air operations in Southeast Asia to USSAG.

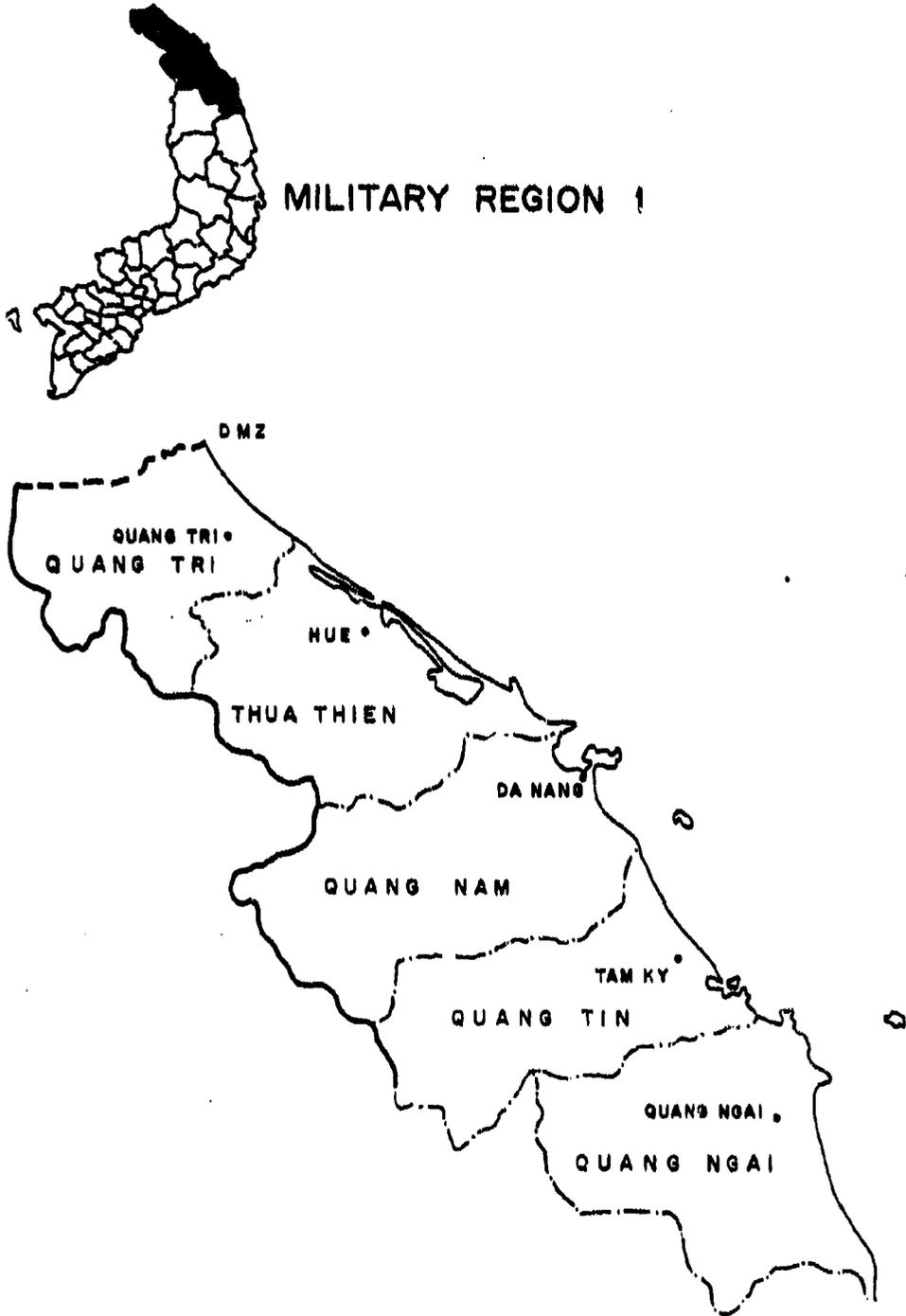


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MILITARY REGION 1

Source: MACDI

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GROUND OPERATIONS: 28 JANUARY-29 MARCH 1973

(U) Initial cease-fire activity was characterized by enemy attempts to regain positions lost in Quang Tri Province just prior to the cease-fire, seize populated areas and key terrain, interdict lines of communication, and conduct harassing attacks designed to limit the capability of ARVN forces to react. RVNAF reaction was immediate and violent. The expenditure of artillery and use of tactical air reached levels higher than those experienced during the NGUYEN HUE Offensive.

(U) After the initial period of ARVN counter-operations the situation began to stabilize. All contested hamlets were returned to government control, and the lines of communication were opened. The character of the conflict changed to primarily attacks-by-fire and minor ground actions. Ground to air fire incidents against VNAF, US, International Commission of Control and Supervision (ICCS), and Four Party Joint Military Commission (FPJMC) aircraft increased. ARVN initiated several operations designed to expand its areas of control to which the enemy reacted strongly; thus, combat activity continued. The ARVN use of artillery and tactical air diminished somewhat but remained above desirable levels.

(U) Late in the period, with the JCS issuing specific cease-fire directives and a reduction of enemy major ground initiatives, the level of combat activity was further reduced. With the exception of major enemy attacks at Rach Rap, Tolle Cham, and in the northern Kien Phong Province, enemy activity became defensive or harassing in nature, consisting of attacks-by-fire, terrorism, assassinations, reaction to ARVN security operations and ground fire against aircraft.

MILITARY REGION 1

(U) At the outset of the cease-fire, activity in Military Region 1 (Fig. 5-1) consisted of enemy attempts to expand his area of control into population centers by seizing hamlets and isolating defending forces by interdicting lines of communication. Major activity was primarily centered in two areas: northern Quang Tri Province and Sa Huynh in southern Quang Ngai Province.

(U) Marine units which had seized the south bank of the Cua Viet River just prior to the cease-fire were soon overrun by violent enemy attacks, and defensive positions were reestablished to the south. No further major combat activity occurred along the Marine Division front. Enemy units did infiltrate marine rear areas but were cleared within a few weeks. In the airborne area of operations enemy units launched heavy indirect fire and ground attacks against the airborne elements and established a foothold on the south bank of the Thach

Han River, which they still maintained at the end of March. Airborne units reacted with extensive artillery bombardment of enemy positions. Enemy forces which infiltrated airborne rear areas were cleared in a short period of time.

(U) In Quang Ngai Province the enemy initiated a major attack and seized the Sa Huynh area after the cease-fire. They gained a major salt producing area and a suitable deep water port, as well as effectively cutting the only land line of communication, Route 1, into Military Region 1. The 2d Division and 1st Ranger Group were slow in organizing a counterattack to recapture the area.

(U) In Thua Thien Province enemy efforts concentrated south and southeast of Phu Bai near FSB Anzio and northwest of Hue near the An Lo bridge, where populated areas were attacked and infiltrated. In the Veghel area 1st Division elements repulsed a tank-infantry attack by the 29th Regiment, 824th NVA Division, which left 14 enemy tanks destroyed.

(U) In the Dai Loc area of Quang Nam Province enemy units occupied several hamlets which were soon cleared by 3d Division elements and Territorial Forces. Farther south in the western Que Son Valley, enemy units launched attacks against ARVN forces that had seized key terrain just prior to the cease-fire and interdicted lines of communication leading into the valley. After initially defending the key terrain, ARVN forces withdrew toward Que Son.

(U) The initial high level of activity was followed by a period in which the ARVN regained control of infiltrated areas. With a reduction in artillery expenditures late in the period the situation in Quang Tri Province began to stabilize. In the Veghel area both enemy and friendly units continued to maneuver and exchange attacks-by-fire which resulted in sporadic contacts. After clearing enemy elements from hamlets in the Dai Loc area 3d Division forces expanded operations into historically contested areas, which the enemy defended with attacks-by-fire and harassing tactics. ARVN forces in the Que Son Valley initiated operations to retake terrain lost after the cease-fire. In southern Quang Ngai 2d Division and 1st Ranger Group forces recaptured the Sa Huynh area, swept south to the military region border, and began returning the population to their homes.

(U) In the final weeks of March the situation in Military Region 1 stabilized considerably. Minor attacks-by-fire and small unit contacts occurred in four areas. In the Son Bo River valley, south of the An Lo bridge, and the Dai Loc area the enemy continued to defend against ARVN attempts

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to clear previously contested areas. Minor contacts continued in the Veghel area. ARVN forces in the Que Son Valley, which regained some of the lost

terrain, reverted to a defensive posture, but continued to receive enemy attacks-by-fire and limited ground attacks.



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Ha Lo Prison in Hanoi, commonly called the Hanoi Hilton.

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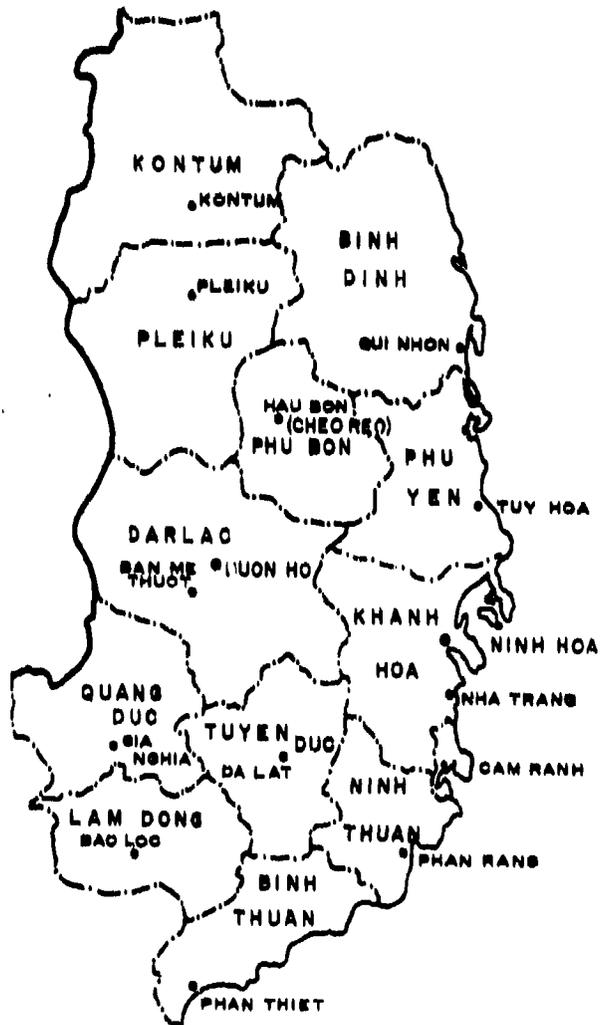
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MILITARY REGION 2



Source: MACDI

Figure: 5-2

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MILITARY REGION 2

(C) Initial enemy cease-fire activity in Military Region 2 (Fig. 5-2) consisted of seizing hamlets and interdiction of lines of communication. As the cease-fire drew near, the enemy launched wide-spread attacks and infiltrated hamlets west of Kontum, northeast of Ban Ma Thuot, southwest of Degi, southwest of Tuy Hoa, and near Phan Thiet. After the cease-fire ARVN forces west of Thanh An were forced back to the district town. Lines of communication interdiction was accomplished on Route 14 south of Kontum and northeast of Ban Me Thout, Route 19 east of Pleiku, and Route 1 in northern Binh Dinh and southern Phu Yen Provinces. On the Degi Peninsula a naval coastal station was overrun, creating a gap in the coastal radar system. The station was reoccupied several days later without opposition; however, the radar equipment was extensively damaged.

(C) The enemy attacks were followed by a series of ARVN operations designed to clear hamlets and open lines of communication. In the Central Highlands the 23d Division initiated operations to open Route 14 in the Kontum Pass area, near My Thach south of Pleiku, and near Buon Ho in northern Darlac Province. A food shortage developed in Kontum because of the Route 14 interdiction south of the city. CH-47 helicopters flew in stores from

Pleiku until the road was opened on 23 February. Two days later the Buon Ho area was cleared and Route 14 was reopened throughout the military Region. In Binh Dinh Province Route 1 was reopened between Hoai Nhon and Phu My. Two roadblocks were cleared on Route 19 near An Khe. In Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa the last of four bridges damaged just prior to the cease-fire was repaired, which allowed the 28th ROK Regiment to deploy from Tuy Hoa to Nha Trang and Cam Ranh Bay. By the midpoint of the cease-fire period all hamlets were returned to government control and all lines of communication were reported open.

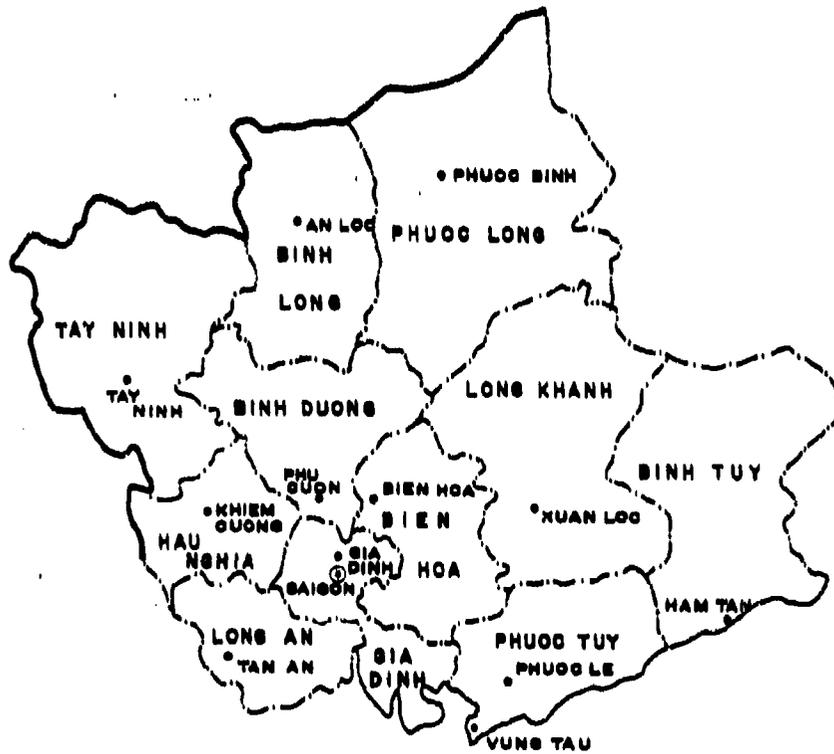
(U) A period of low activity was followed by the conduct of ARVN security operations which generated mixed enemy action. West of Thanh An ARVN units attempted to retake a fire support base evacuated shortly after the cease-fire. The enemy reacted with heavy attacks-by-fire and ground attacks. Subsequently, ARVN units assumed a defensive posture as enemy elements continued harassment activities.

(U) Through the end of March enemy activity in Military Region 2 consisted of minor attacks-by-fire and light ground contacts scattered in Kontum, Pleiku, Binh Dinh, and Binh Thuan Provinces, with some major contacts west of Thanh An in Pleiku Province and Hoai Nhon in Binh Dinh Province. Elsewhere in the region the situation was stable.



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Source: MACDI

Figure: 5-3

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MILITARY REGION 3

(U) Immediately following the cease-fire, enemy forces attempted to seize control of populated areas and interdict lines of communication across the center of Military Region 3 (Fig. 5-3) in Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, Binh Duong, Bien Hoa, Long Khanh, and Binh Tuy Provinces. These efforts were relatively successful as enemy elements initially occupied or infiltrated over 100 hamlets and interdicted Route 20 in Long Khanh; Routes 1, 15, and 314 in Bien Hoa; Route 13 in Binh Duong; and Route 22 in Tay Ninh. After the first 24 hours the number of contested hamlets was reduced to about 30 and within ten days all hamlets were returned to government control, and all interdicted routes reopened.

(U) A period of relative quiet then settled over the region. Enemy activity was limited to attacks-by-fire and minor probing actions, while ARVN secured population centers and lines of communication, and reacted to enemy activity. Enemy attacks appeared to be directed mainly at territorial outposts, possibly in the attempt to restrict Territorial Forces to short range security patrols. During this period the enemy began constructing hamlets in the Hobo Woods and the central Iron Triangle areas, which ARVN proceeded to destroy with little enemy contact. Ground to air fire continued, with three helicopters and one L-19 shot down, and two other aircraft damaged. One of the helicopters, a CH-47 with a US crew of five, was shot down ten

kilometers south of An Loc after delivering supplies to the Four Party Joint Military Commission site. Two of the Americans were evacuated in critical condition, and one later died.

(U) As the mid-point of the cease-fire period passed, ARVN initiated operations to reopen the road from Phuoc Vinh to Song Be in Phuoc Long Province. The operation was successful, although it resulted in minor contacts in the vicinity of Dong Xoi and in the Song Be-Phuoc Binh areas. Minor contacts and attacks-by-fire continued along the route until ARVN convoy operations were completed. In mid-March the enemy began to restrict civilian traffic along routes in Phuoc Long, indicating a desire to tighten his control in the area.

(C) During the latter weeks in March, enemy operations were focused on the Tonle Cham outpost in Tay Ninh Province and the Rach Bap-Ben Cat area in Binh Duong Province. Tonle Cham remained in a state of siege. ARVN reaction to the enemy activity around Rach Bap-Ben Cat was successful and the situation stabilized. ARVN security operations in the area along Route 2 north of Duc Thanh in Phuoc Tuy Province resulted in minor contacts and attacks-by-fire during late March, as ARVN continued constructing outposts where there had been little or no government presence in recent years. By the end of the March minor attacks-by-fire, booby traps, ground probes, and ground to air fire at aircraft accounted for most of the enemy activity.



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MILITARY REGION 4

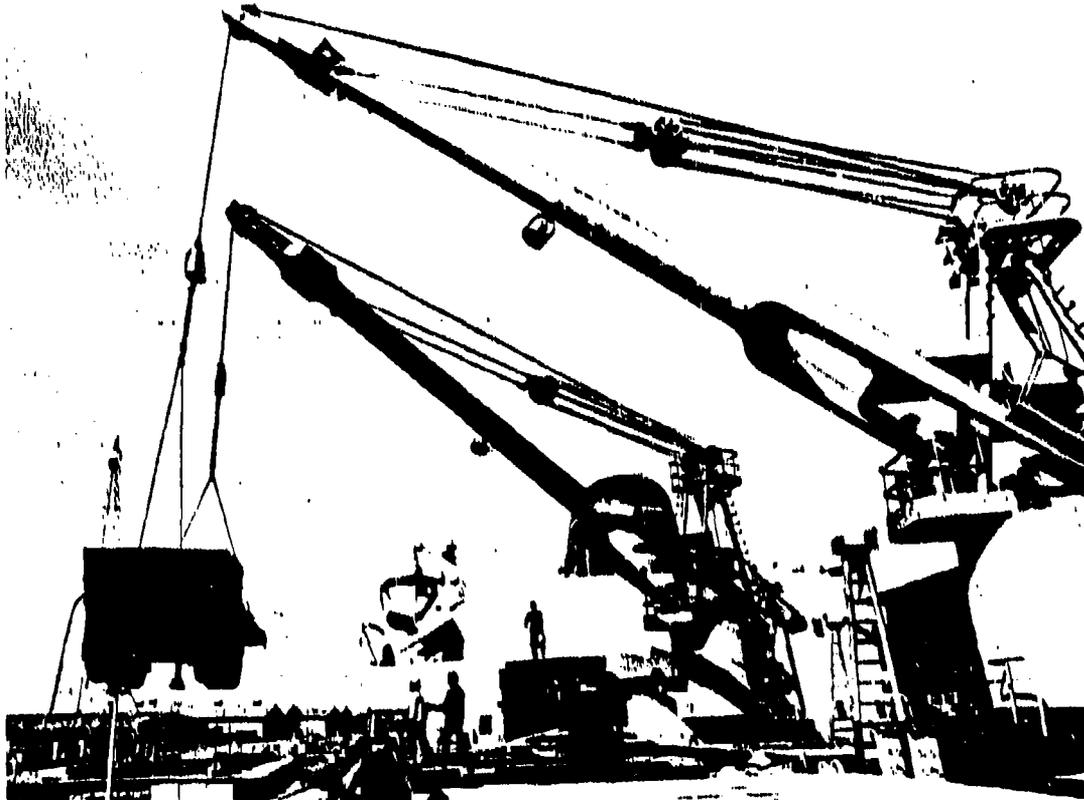
(U) In Military Region 4 (Fig. 5-4) enemy activity was characterized by hamlet infiltration, ground attacks against populated areas and widespread attacks-by-fire. Although widely scattered, the effort was concentrated in the border areas of Chau Doc and Kien Phong Provinces, and from Dinh Tuong southwest to Chuong Thien Province. ARVN reacted quickly to the enemy initiatives and after the first three days all land and water lines of communication were reported open; about 15 hamlets remained contested. During the next few weeks activity fluctuated in intensity but remained concentrated in the same areas. By early March the last of the contested hamlets was returned to government control.

(U) During the mid-portion of the 61 day period, major activity centered in Chuong Thien Province, but also spread to Bac Lieu, An Xuyen, Ba Xuyen, and Kien Giang Provinces with attacks-by-fire and minor ground contacts. ARVN continued to react with security operations. During this period the enemy also disrupted international traffic along the Mekong River in the Hong Ngu-Cal Cai area, and

the intensity of activity there increased as enemy forces crossed the Khmer border and launched attacks-by-fire and ground attacks. ARVN reinforcements deployed to the area, and in numerous contacts with the 101D Regiment pushed the enemy forces back into the Khmer Republic.

(U) From early to mid-March widespread enemy efforts consisted of light attacks against Territorial Force outposts and terrorist attacks against population centers, to include attacks-by-fire, mining incidents, assassinations and abductions. The terrorist attacks included a mortar attack on a school in Tri Ton and a rocket attack on a refugee settlement, resulting in heavy civilian casualties. In the Hong Ngu area enemy forces renewed their attacks, which resulted in major ground contacts with heavy enemy casualties.

(U) In late March the major enemy activity remained concentrated in Dinh Tuong and Chau Doc Provinces with continuing emphasis on standoff attacks against outposts, population centers, and terrorist activity. ARVN continued to react to enemy initiatives and conducted security operations around population centers as the last US elements departed Vietnam.



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Ex-PW CAPT William J. Henderson, USAF, (right) is escorted to a waiting C-141 at Gia Lam Airfield, Hanoi.

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ANNEX A

THE ENEMY

NORTH VIETNAM

1972 GOALS AND STRATEGY

(S) In 1972, neither increased bombing, the mining of Haiphong and other ports, nor the prospect of a cease-fire altered Communist war aims, which as in the past emanated from Hanoi. Throughout the year North Vietnamese Government and Communist Party officials continually reaffirmed Hanoi's intention to fight on to total victory and reiterated that any settlement of the war must include both military and political issues. Hanoi's basic goals in the war remained the domination of the Republic of Vietnam, the unification of Vietnam under a Communist government and the establishment of a sphere of influence throughout Indochina. Enemy activities in Laos and the Khmer Republic were predicated on this latter goal as well as the necessity to control vital base areas and lines of communication between North and South Vietnam.¹

(U) The long time intransigence of the North Vietnamese rulers concerning their program for peace in Indochina suddenly mellowed, leading many to believe that a dovish attitude had prevailed since mid-1972. Some analysts felt this was due to the failure of the North Vietnamese Army and Viet Cong to achieve significant military results in 1972 and the resultant realization of this failure in Hanoi. Any North Vietnamese concessions at the Paris negotiations appeared to be only a policy change governing the conduct of the war and not any change of purpose. Reunification in the minds of the North Vietnamese leadership was seen to be an obsession and non-negotiable. On this point all factions of the ruling party appeared to be united, other disagreements notwithstanding.²

(C) Viewing enemy strategy since 1967 in light of this goal it is believed that at that time Hanoi made the decision to move from the guerrilla phase to the final or war of movement phase in 1968. The 1968 Tet offensive resulted from this decision. With the failure of the 1968 Tet offensive, the enemy at last realized the futility of this strategy, and COSVN Resolution #9 published in that year and the subsequent Resolution #10 directed a return to the guerrilla warfare phase of insurgency. This phase continued until late 1971, when the enemy leadership, observing the withdrawal of the bulk of US forces, determined that the time was ripe to return to the war of movement phase. They believed that reversion to this phase would bring

about the downfall of President Thieu through the defeat of the RVNAF on the battlefield and the destruction of the Vietnamization and pacification programs.³

(S) The first clear indication that there would be a shift in strategy to the war of movement phase in 1972 appeared in an unnumbered resolution issued by COSVN in December 1971. In essence, the resolution called for a shift in the balance of power through the use of main force warfare and political initiatives. It was followed by several supplemental resolutions which provided further instructions for the conduct of the 1972 offensive. The objective of the new strategy was to strengthen the Communist political position through demonstrated military victories while at the same time gaining control over the countryside through the disruption of the pacification program and consequent discrediting of the Republic of Vietnam's ability to effectively govern rural areas.⁴

(S) Hanoi apparently realized in August 1972 that the war of movement strategy was doomed to failure. Such an assessment probably led to the breakthrough in the Paris peace talks. Numerous enemy documents which came into friendly hands in October indicated that the enemy believed a cease-fire would be signed on 31 October and was making plans to utilize the period from immediately prior to the signing of the cease-fire until shortly after it became effective to further his long range objectives of seizing power in South Vietnam.⁵

(S) Hanoi's preparations for a 31 October cease-fire were in vain as that date passed without the anticipated cease-fire. In late November fresh preparations were made for a cease-fire that Hanoi once again appeared to believe was imminent. PW and agent reports in late November indicated that the Communists expected a seven to ten day transition period between the signing of an agreement and the arrival of the International Control Commission. Communist strategy during this transition period was to launch attacks to quickly overrun and hold areas seized in the earlier spring-summer offensive and later recaptured by the RVNAF. It also appeared that the enemy was planning to deactivate NVA troops in the South and retain them in a civilian capacity in local VC units. This would enable the North Vietnamese to maintain a significant covert military presence.⁶

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RELATIONS WITH THE PRC AND USSR

(C) In previous years the Democratic Republic of Vietnam maintained close relations with both the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the USSR, relying heavily on their assistance in achieving its war aims. Chinese and Russian support of the North consisted of large scale military and economic aid as well as propaganda which endorsed the aims of the North and condemned US actions in Vietnam. In 1971 North Vietnam continued to maintain close relations with these two countries.⁷

(S) In 1972 relations between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the People's Republic of China were marked by continuing military and economic assistance. On the diplomatic front, however, Chinese support of North Vietnam in the form of criticism of such US military actions as increased bombing and the mining of ports was notably restrained. This was apparently a result of improved Sino-US relations following President Nixon's visit to Peking. In January the New China News Agency announced that China would provide supplementary "gratuitous" military and economic aid to North Vietnam under a protocol signed in Peking on January 22. Coming less than a month prior to President Nixon's visit to Peking this was probably intended to demonstrate continued Chinese support, to allay Hanoi's fears about Chinese intentions, and to counter Soviet claims that Chinese support was waning.⁸ Further evidence of Chinese goodwill toward the Democratic Republic of Vietnam came after the US mine blockade of North Vietnamese ports when the Chinese made available extensive port and rail facilities to transport necessary supplies to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. In addition, China supplied food to the North in larger amounts than for any previous periods of comparable duration.⁹ By September Peking stepped up its efforts to help Hanoi counter the effects of US interdiction and had even given in to requests to facilitate larger Soviet aid shipments via China. By late November it was estimated that neither the Chinese nor the Russians would cease shipment of necessary war materiel to Hanoi.¹⁰

(U) The ample material support of the Chinese was not matched by similar propaganda support. The Vietnam war presented China with the foreign policy dilemma of minimizing the effect of the war on relations with the US while at the same time supporting the North's war effort. In an attempt to resolve this dilemma Peking, while providing extensive economic and military aid to Hanoi, was restrained in its condemnation of the US. According to assertions in an August issue of the Hanoi Party daily Nhan Dan, China was pressuring North Vietnam to accept a less than satisfactory settle-

ment to the war; North Vietnamese suspicions of Chinese intentions were clearly enunciated in an editorial in Nhan Dan on 17 August which indicated that Hanoi believed that both Peking and Moscow were improving their relations with Washington at the expense of North Vietnamese interests.¹¹

(S) In 1972 North Vietnam's relations with the USSR were similar to those with China. Thus, while the USSR continued to support the North with large shipments of military equipment (from the mining of North Vietnamese ports in May until mid-October, more than 259,000 tons of cargo for the North were delivered to Chinese ports) and dispatched technicians to Hanoi, it appeared that after President Nixon's visit to Moscow the Soviets were attempting to get Hanoi to adopt a more forthright attitude toward the Paris peace talks. It was believed that Soviet President Podgorny's visit to Hanoi in June was intended for this purpose as well as to reassure the North Vietnamese that their interests had not been overlooked in discussions with President Nixon.¹² The joint communique issued at the end of Podgorny's visit indicated general disagreement over the wisdom of North Vietnamese actions in Laos and the Khmer Republic, the actions of the US to achieve peace, and the criteria for a political settlement. Based on an editorial in Nhan Dan it appeared that Hanoi was displeased with the US-Moscow summit meeting and a May 25 Moscow Radio Vietnamese language broadcast which insisted that Soviet-US talks were in the interest of world socialism.¹³ As 1972 drew to a close, it appeared that large scale aid notwithstanding, Hanoi was suspicious of Moscow's intentions in pressing for a peace settlement. As with Peking the Hanoi leadership felt that Moscow was attempting to improve its relations with Washington at the expense of the North Vietnamese.

ECONOMIC SITUATION

(C) In 1972, despite stepped up bombing and the mining of the ports which created evident strains, the North Vietnamese economy was able to meet at least minimal requirements to satisfy domestic needs and allow Hanoi to continue its pursuit of war aims. This was due in large measure to economic and material aid from China and the USSR and the expansion of land lines of communication between China and North Vietnam. In several issues of the Communist Party newspaper Nhan Dan which were published in May, food shortages were suggested; localities were urged to step up agricultural production and citizens were told to economize their rice consumption. Continued agriculture problems were indicated in a 1 December issue of Nhan Dan.¹⁴

(FOUO) Economic problems resulting from US bombing and mining were brought out in an article

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The effects of intensive bombing on a Hanoi barge facility on 25 December 1972 illustrate the US effort to cripple North Vietnamese communications.

serialized in June issues of Nhan Dan which indicated particular concern in two areas -- insuring sufficient food supplies and maintaining efficient communications.¹⁵ Despite frequent admissions of hardships created by US actions, the North Vietnamese leadership appeared committed to pursuing its aims to final victory. Throughout the year statements to this effect were made repeatedly by

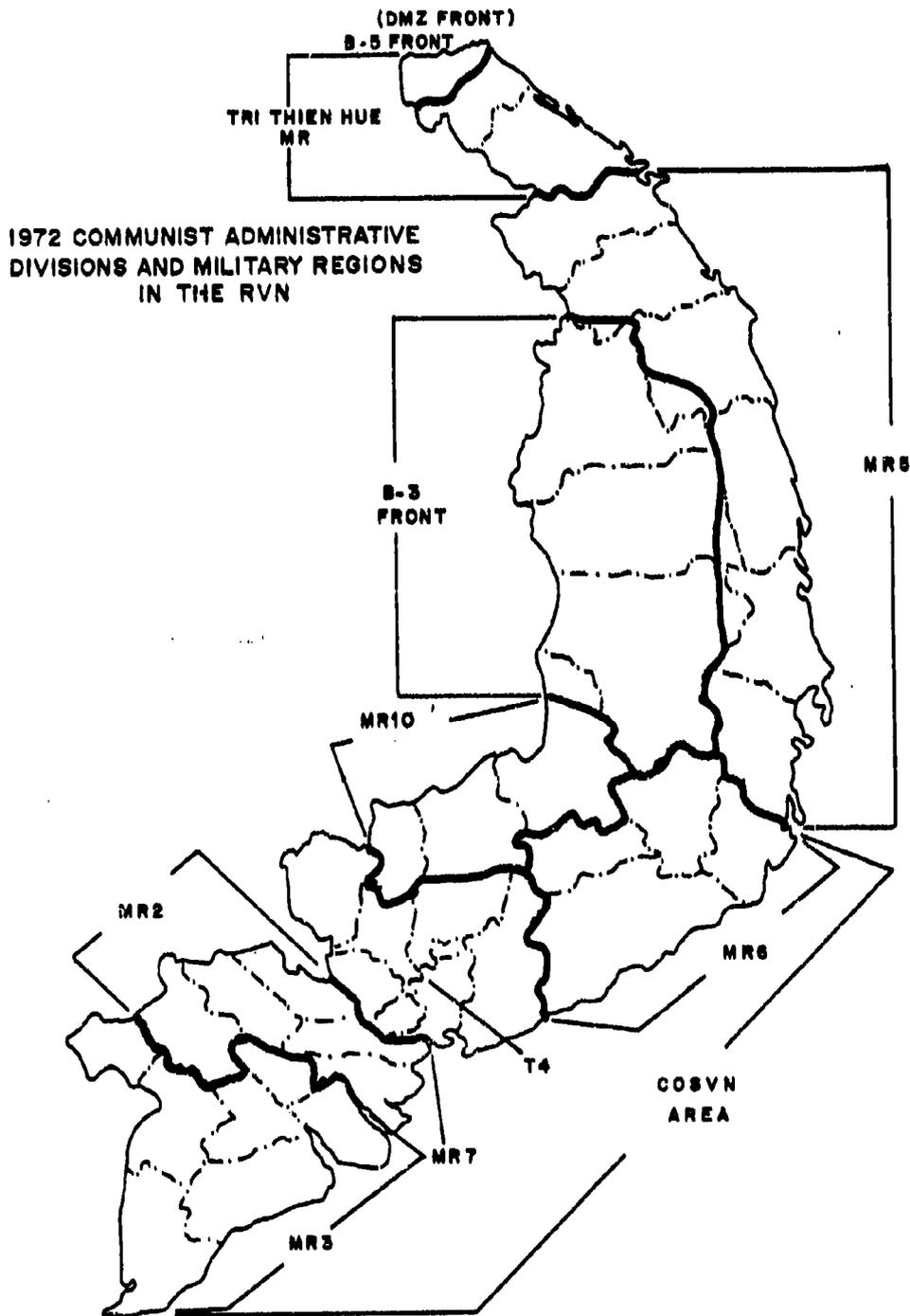
Communist Party officials and in Party-sponsored publications.¹⁶

(S) The type of aid provided to North Vietnam by the Chinese, Russians, and East Bloc countries in 1972 was similar to that of previous years. Military aid included APCs, tanks, MIG-19 jet fighters, radars, and SAM-2 equipment as well as conventional infantry weapons. Economic aid included

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REPRODUCTION
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Source: MACDI

Figure: A-1

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petroleum products, food, vehicles, construction equipment, industrial materials and steel products. In late 1972 there were indications that neither the People's Republic of China nor the USSR would balk at continued shipments of war materiel to the North. Each country appeared intent on maintaining a presence in Indochina rather than yield to the other.¹⁷

(S) From January to April 1972 military and economic aid to the North in millions of dollars was as follows:

—Military - USSR \$20, PRC \$25.

MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE REPUBLIC

ORGANIZATION

(S) In the Republic of Vietnam military operations were directed by Hanoi through the High Command of the North Vietnam Armed Forces either directly, through major tactical headquarters in the northern half of the Republic, or through the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN). The North Vietnamese High Command exercised control over the northern Republic of Vietnam, to include the following Communist military regions: B-5 Front, Tri Thien Hue Military Region (MRTTH), Military Region 5, and the B-3 Front. COSVN exercised tactical command over the remainder of South Vietnam (Fig. A-1). This command was vested in COSVN's military arm, the so-called South Vietnam Liberation Army (SVNLA) Headquarters.¹⁸

(S) Enemy units operated either as main force or local force structures organized as divisions, regiments, and battalions, with artillery support. Main force units were subordinate to the military region (Fig. A-2). All NVA units were main force units, and North Vietnamese troops made up predominant portions of the VC main force units. Local force units, organized as battalions or smaller, were subordinate to the province or district level organization. Generally, they did not operate outside the province or district to which they were assigned. NVA personnel gradually appeared in local force units, though at a lower ratio than in main force units. Included in the local force category were guerrillas, the part-time soldiers whose main task was terrorism. Subordinated normally to the district level or lower, they did not operate far from the area in which they lived. Coupling all echelons with the political aspects of the struggle was the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI), which paralleled the military structure and guided the enemy military activity. Through its hard core cadre, many of whom held military as well as

—Economic - USSR \$110, PRC \$35, East Europe \$60.

Due to the blockade and disruption of rail lines which forced shipments into irregular schedules and modes, only fragmentary data were obtained for the balance of 1972. Shipments of combat materiel from the USSR actually identified between May and late December were valued at \$19 million and from China at \$20 million. North Vietnam's Communist allies continued to provide significant amounts of economic aid; however, data on composition and volume were too fragmentary to permit an estimate of value.¹⁹

political leadership positions, the enemy controlled the insurgency.²⁰

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

(S) During 1972, Hanoi's strategy continued to be based on the long-range goal of the reunification of North and South Vietnam under Communist rule. In a major change from previous years, however, the Hanoi leadership dropped the former strategy of protracted warfare, substituting in its place a strategy calling for a "war of movement" or conventional warfare in the South. This new strategy culminated in the enemy's NGUYEN HUE Offensive which began in late March.

(S) The offensive consisted of an invasion by a total of eight enemy divisions which thrust into the South on the following three widely separated fronts:

- Through the demilitarized zone into Quang Tri Province, with a concurrent push on Hue (3 divisions).
- In Kontum Province in the Central Highlands (2 divisions).
- In Binh Long Province 100 kilometers north of Saigon where the enemy launched a tank supported invasion from sanctuaries in Cambodia (3 divisions).

The invasion marked the first time since 1969 that true conventional tactics employing a force of combined infantry, artillery, and armor had been used by the enemy.²¹

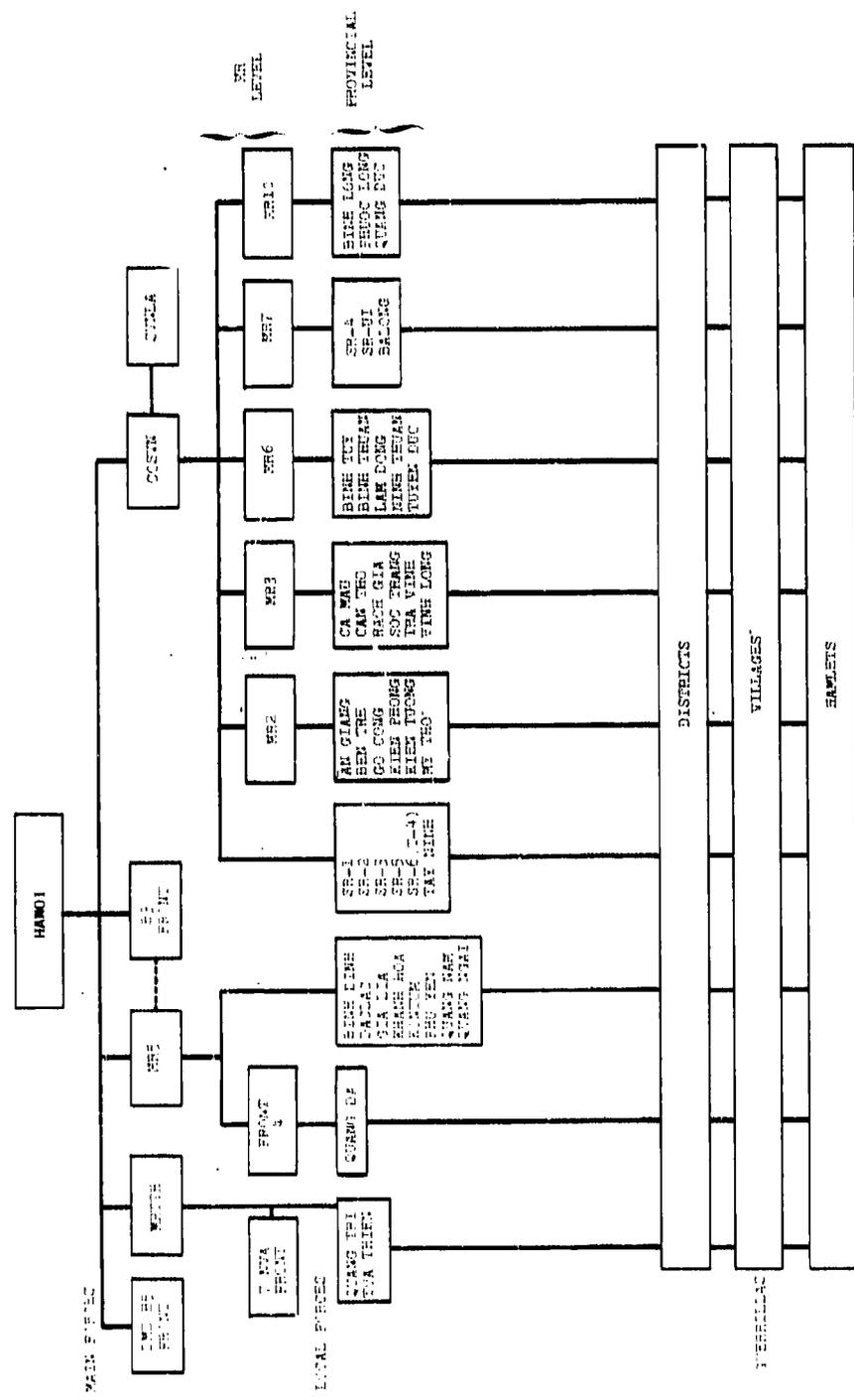
(S) During the year, the enemy, while employing conventional tactics on such widely dispersed battlefields as Quang Tri, Kontum, and An Loc, continued the use of guerrilla tactics throughout South Vietnam. Through this combination he hoped to spread RVNAF by attacking in South Vietnam's Military Region 1 and 2 and then striking in the south once friendly forces were deployed northward. Conventional military victories would then lead to the destruction of the RVNAF and with

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NVA MILITARY TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION



NR LEVEL
PROVINCIAL LEVEL

Figure: A-2

Source: MACDI

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them the Vietnamization program. The enemy also expected to disrupt pacification by seizing large land areas within the South, creating an environment for a "spontaneous uprising" against the South Vietnamese Government. By fall, the enemy had failed to achieve either his military or political objectives, which led him to conduct serious negotiations in Paris. Militarily, he had been thwarted by a combination of factors: failure to exploit successes and lack of Viet Cong local force participation, RVNAF combat strength and mobility, and US bombardment and mining of North Vietnamese harbors. Politically, his failure stemmed from a lack of support by the South Vietnamese people and their refusal to remain in Communist-held areas.²⁴

(C) Hanoi's military and political setbacks combined with the prospects of a cease-fire led to a change in strategy first noted in documents captured in early October. Indications were that prior to an anticipated cease-fire the enemy was infiltrating new forces and weapons and deploying main force units in widely scattered areas of South Vietnam to cause the dispersal of ARVN units. Concurrently, enemy units were breaking down into smaller, more flexible units capable of supporting local guerrillas. By deploying his units in small groups over widespread areas and employing them in extensive attacks-by-fire on population centers and sporadic interdiction of major lines of communication, the enemy believed he could present a facade of control over significant portions of South Vietnam and alienate people in these areas from the government. Indications were that immediately prior to any cease-fire enemy forces would attempt to occupy widely separated and relatively undefended hamlets in populated rural areas. Hanoi appeared to believe that widely distributed pockets of Communist control in areas otherwise controlled by the Republic of Vietnam — if permitted to survive and become recognized by the International Control Commission — would significantly increase Communist visibility and access to the local populace. In the event of a cease-fire the enemy planned to rebuild and expand the Viet Cong Infrastructure and infiltrate South Vietnamese government agencies. Selective terrorism and assassinations would

continue to weaken the Republic of Vietnam, while the Communists would use popular grievances, especially in refugee camps and crowded urban areas, to build an anti-Thieu political movement.²⁵

(S) Prior to the cease-fire, enemy strategy for the period December 1972 through April 1973 was dictated by two major considerations: a need to replenish supplies and the requirement to maintain a credible threat to enhance political goals. Within the South the enemy would continue to defend in northern Military Region 1. Elsewhere he would continue to position his forces to gain maximum attention, concurrently causing the dispersal of ARVN forces and thus minimizing the threat of ARVN counteroffensives. New areas of operation were to be established. Main force NVA units would continue to resupply in place and operate in scattered areas to give the appearance of occupying widespread territory. Enemy offensive capabilities would be limited and not so strong as during the 1972 Nguyen Hue Offensive. There would be no series of major coordinated country wide attacks. However, heightened activity in up to regimental size could occur as the enemy attempted to keep ARVN on the defensive and expand territorial gains. Enemy activity would be characterized by intermittent ground action, shellings, sapper activity, terrorism, line of communication interdiction and sabotage.²⁴

VC/NVA ORDER OF BATTLE

(C) Owing to the enemy NGUYEN HUE Offensive which commenced in late March and early April on three widely separated fronts, there was a great deal of movement of enemy units during the year. The following order of battle maps showing locations of enemy regiments and divisions are considered representative of the disposition of major enemy units in 1972 (Figs. A-3 to A-26). They indicate the location of enemy units at the beginning of 1972, at the start of the offensive, in July when the offensive had been halted, in September when Quang Tri City was retaken by ARVN, and at the time of the cease-fire.²⁵ NVA and VC personnel and combat strengths are shown in Figures A-27 through A-29.

THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE

(C) In their attempt to gain control over South Vietnam the Communists relied on four interrelated front organizations: the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP), the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF), the South Vietnam National Liberation Army (SVNLA), and the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG). Collec-

tively these organizations were known as the Viet Cong Infrastructure or VCI (Fig. A-30).

(C) The VCI included the leadership and cadre of the party and front organizations at all levels. Overall control was exerted by the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), led by Pham Hung, who was also a deputy premier in the government

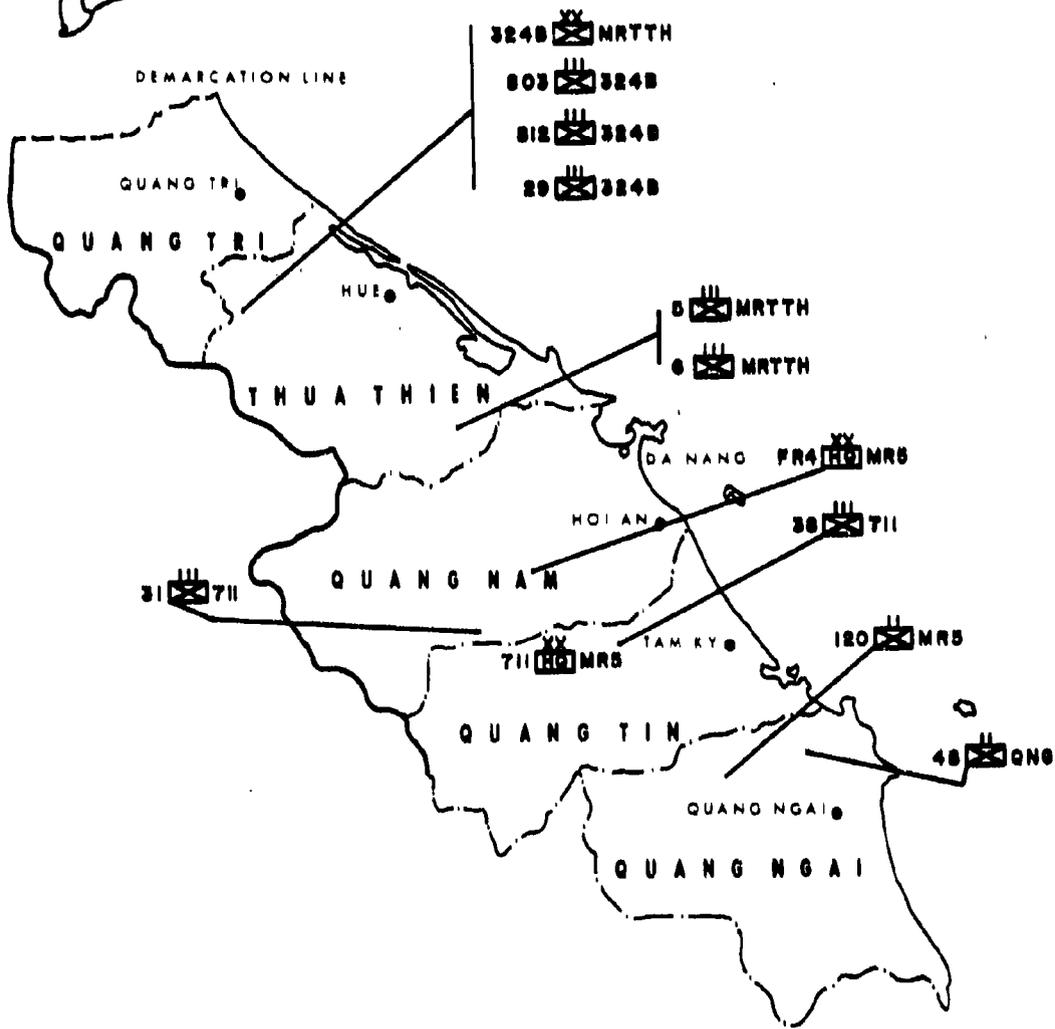
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 1

(JAN 72)



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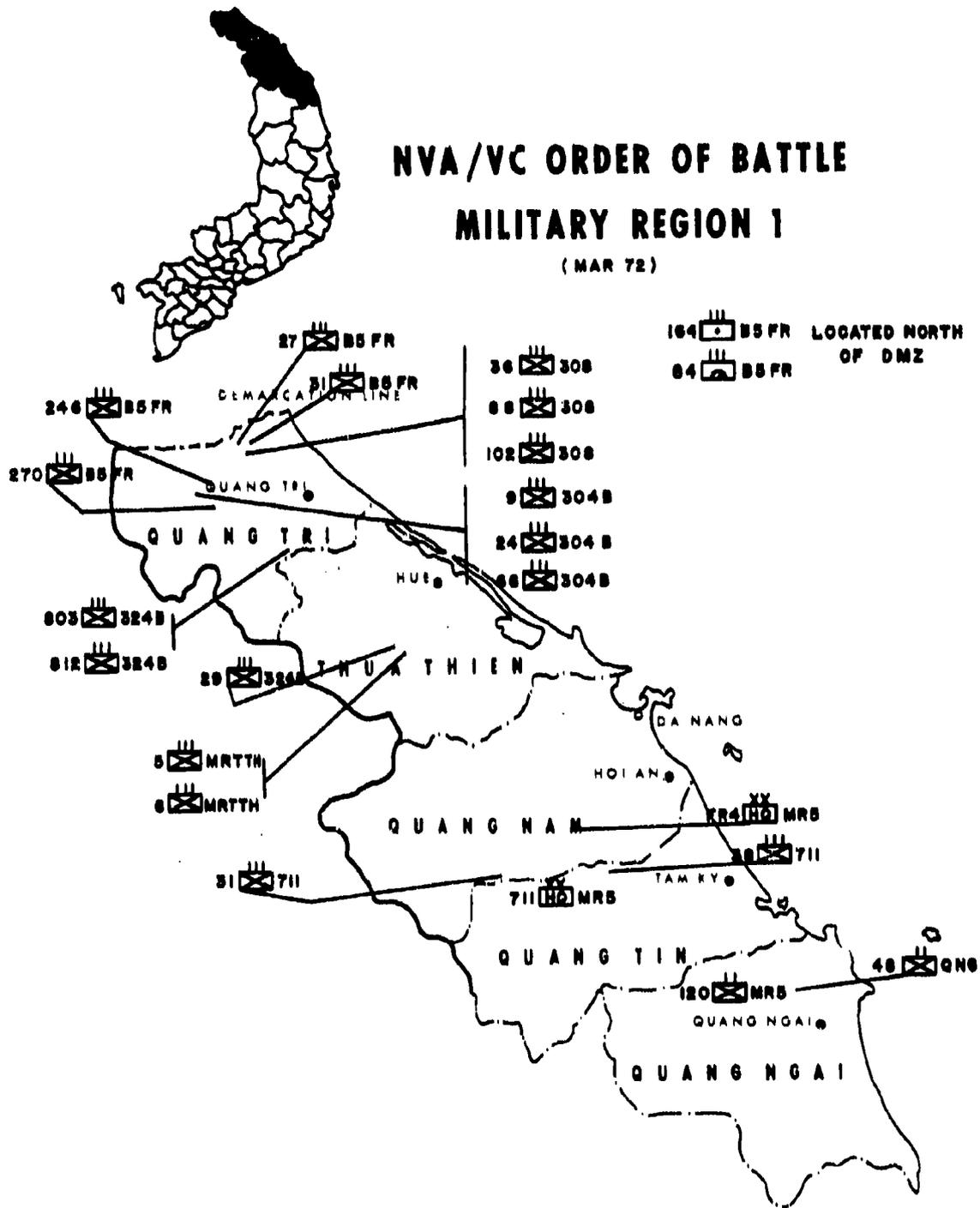
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Figure: A-3

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Figure: A-4

A-9

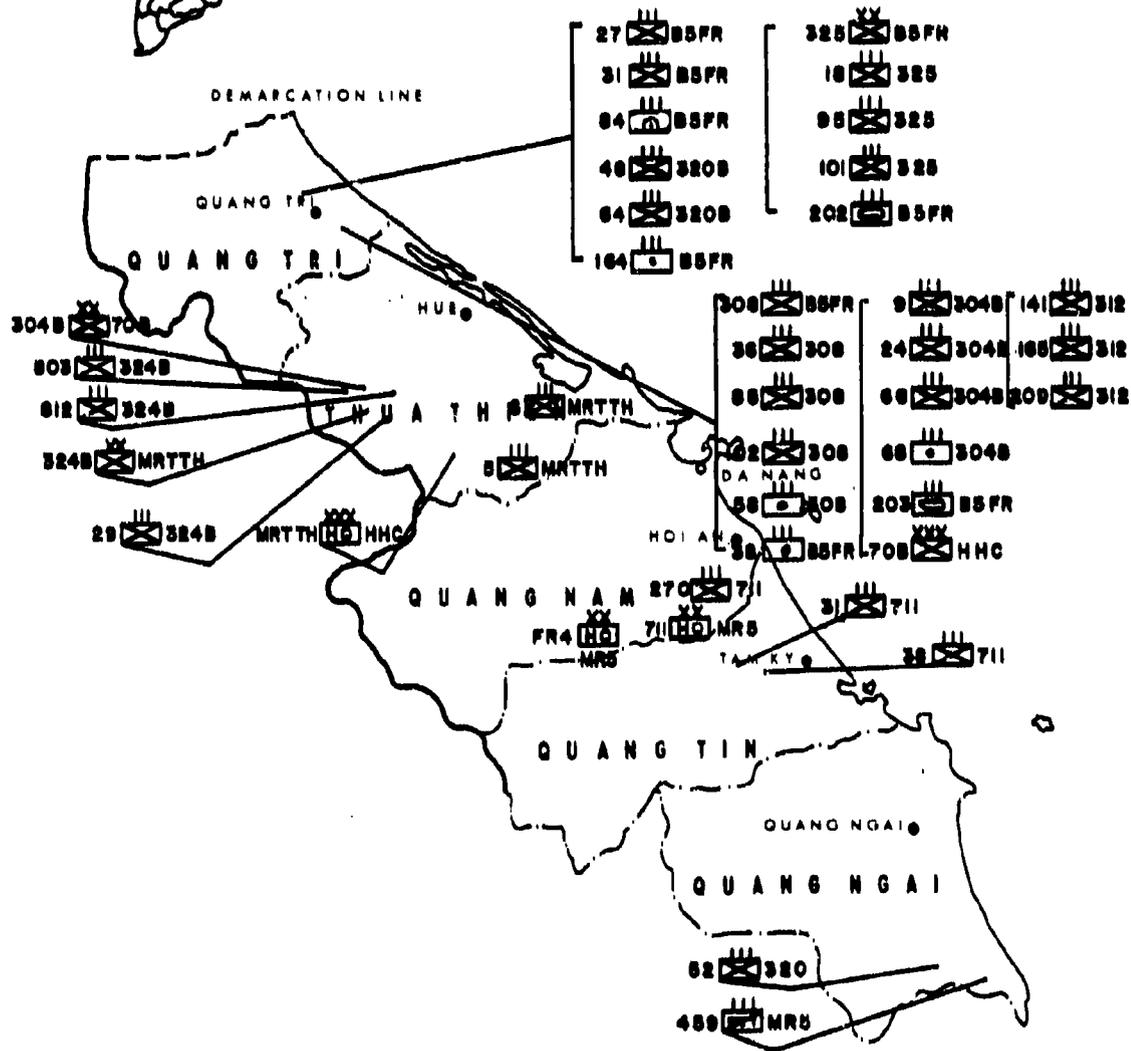
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 1

(SEP 72)



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Figure: A-6

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Figure: A-8

A-13

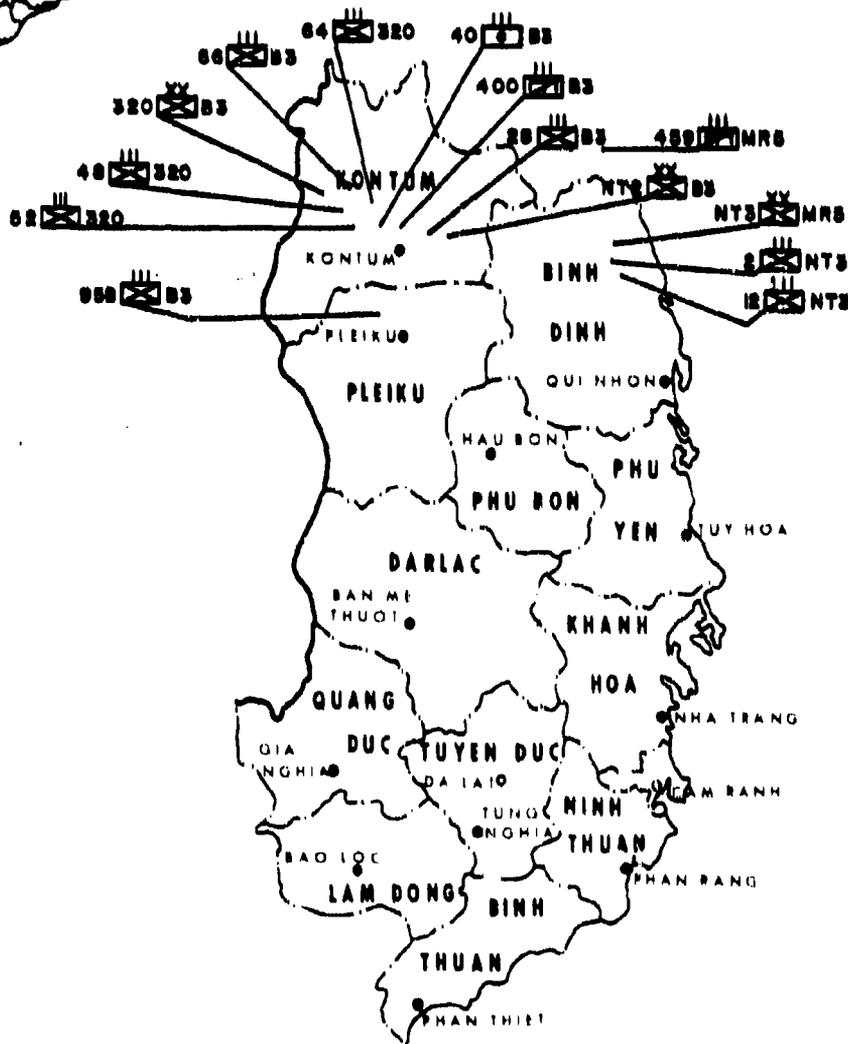
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 2

(MAR 72)



Source: MACDI

Figure A 10

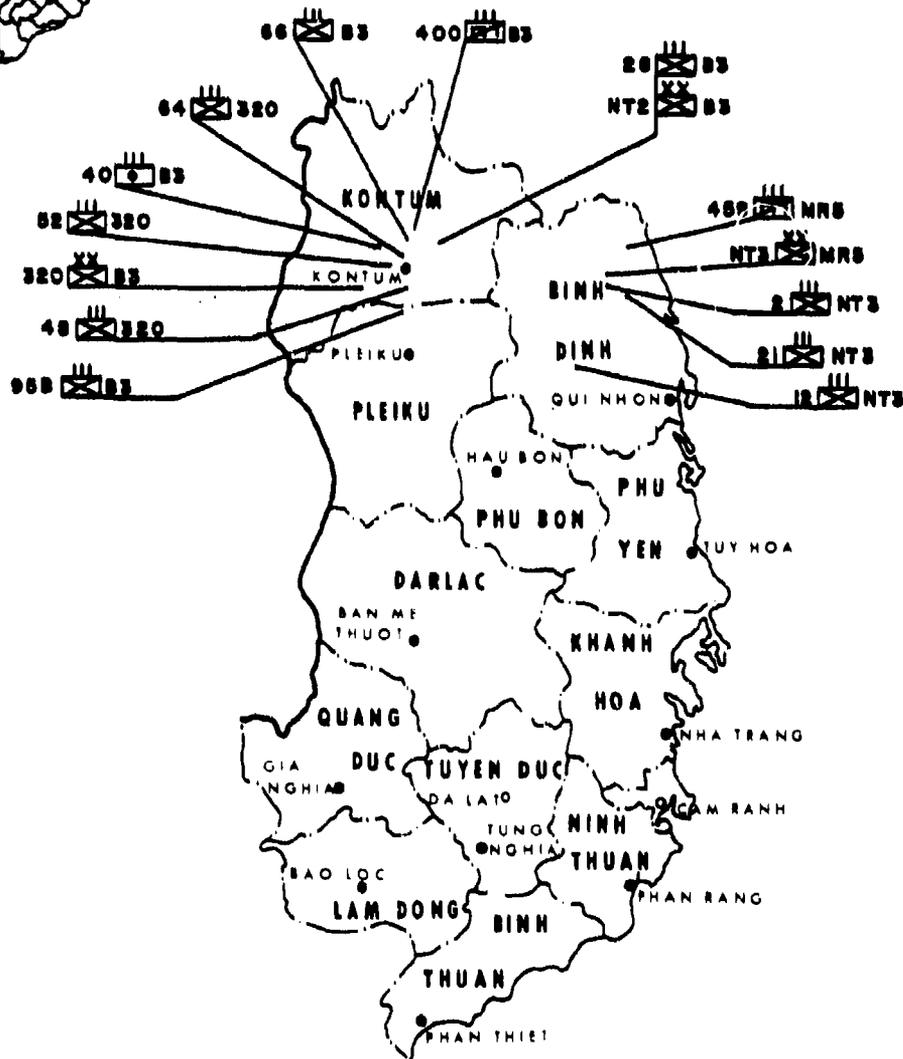
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 2 (JUL 72)



Source: MACDI

Figure: A-11

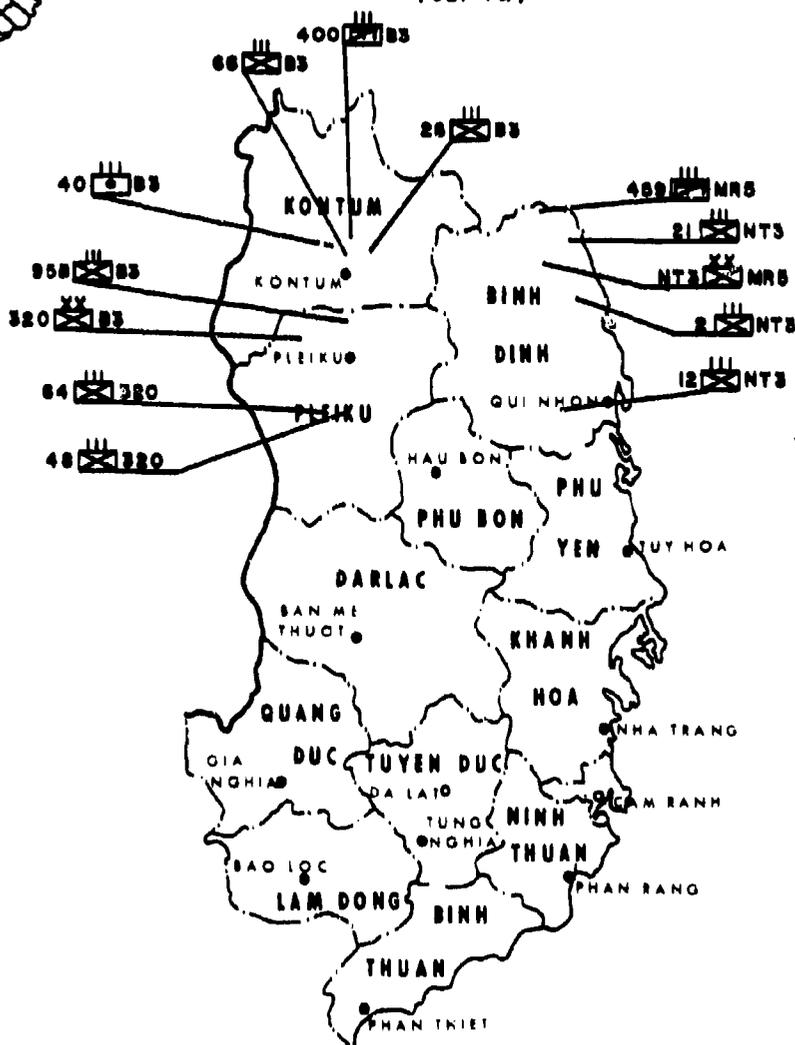
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 2

(SEP 72)



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Figure: A-12

A-17

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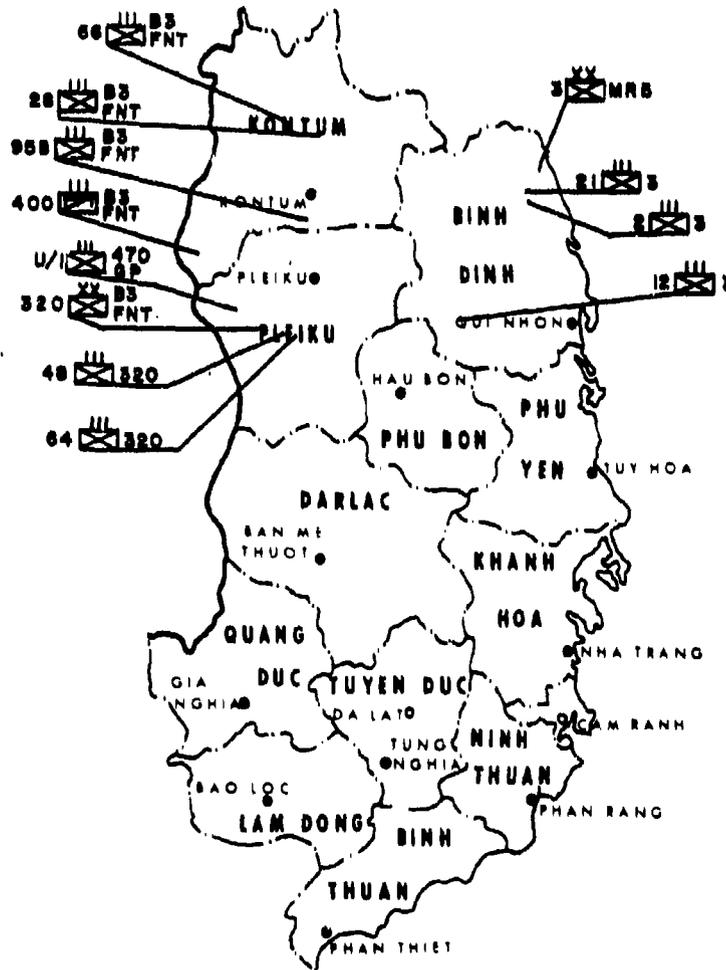
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 2

(DEC 72)



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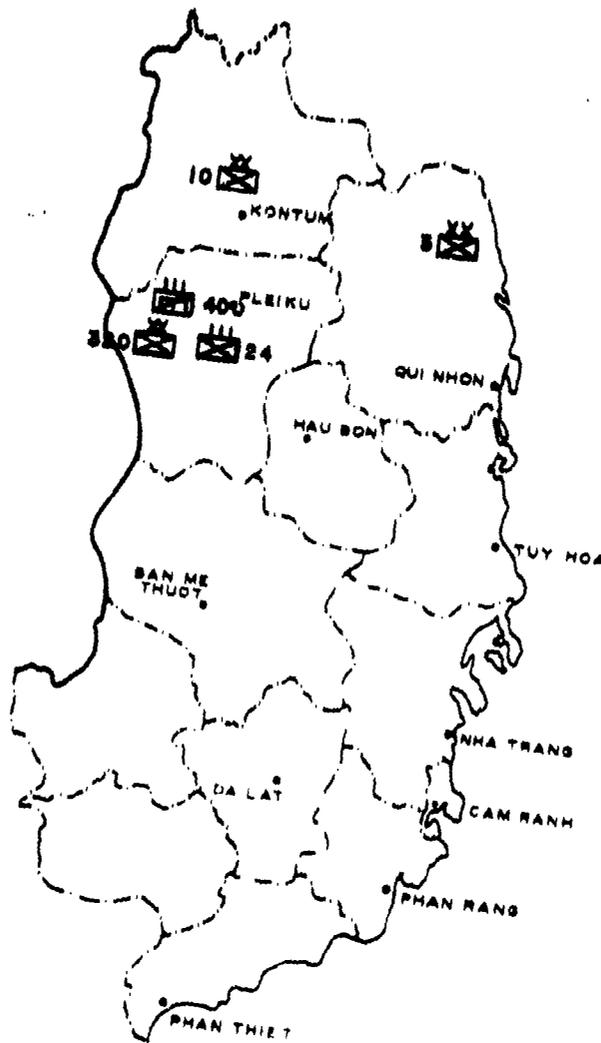
Figure: A-13

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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 2 (20 JAN 78)



Source: MACDI

A-19

Figure: A-14

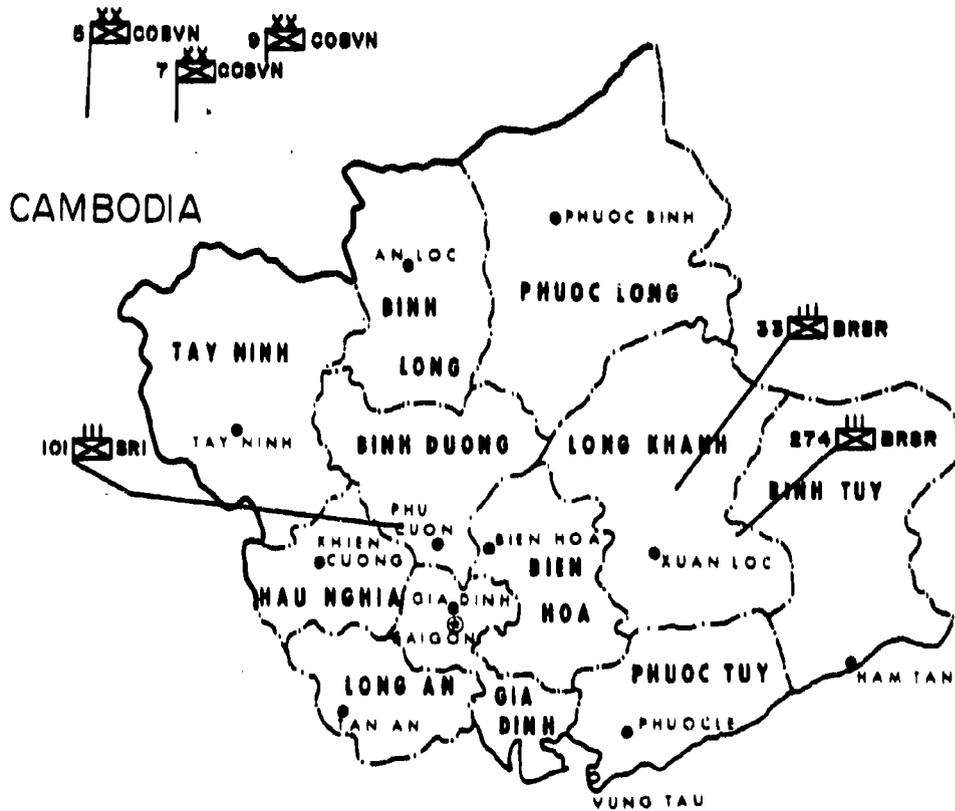
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 3

(JAN 78)



Source: MACDI

Figure: A-15

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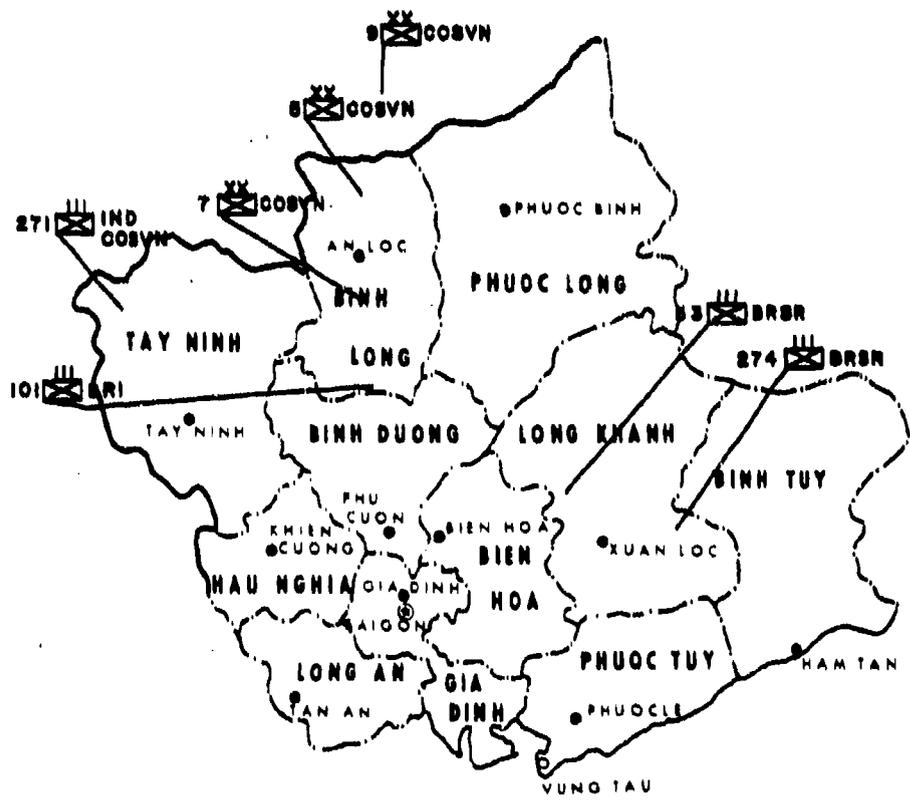
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE

MILITARY REGION 3

(MARTE)



Source: MACDI

Figure: A-16

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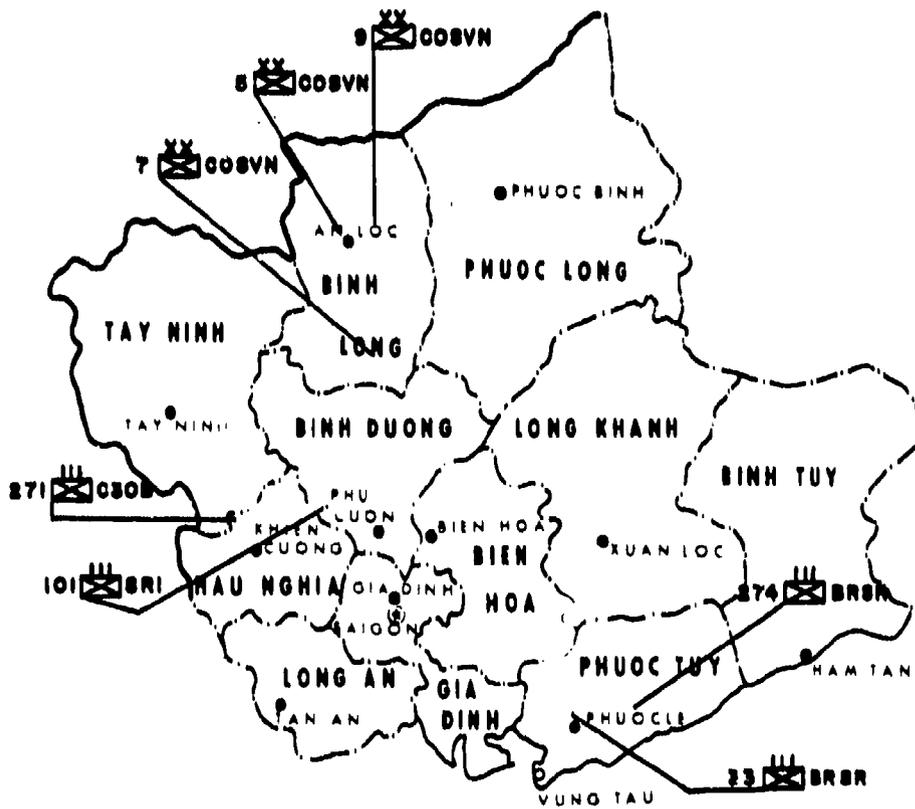
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 3

(JUL 78)



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Figure: A-17

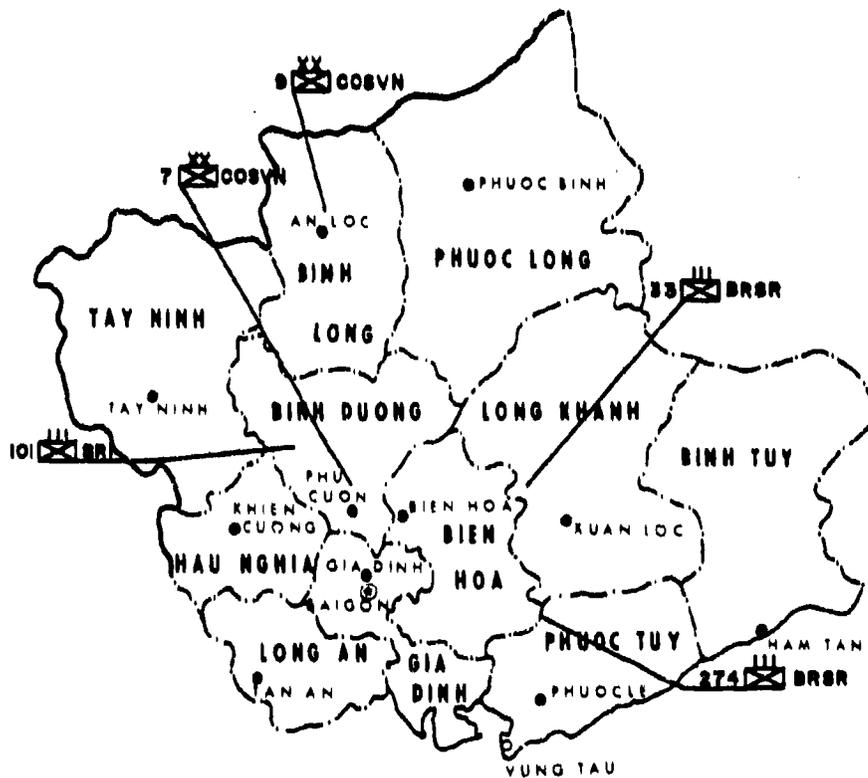
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 3

(SEP 72)



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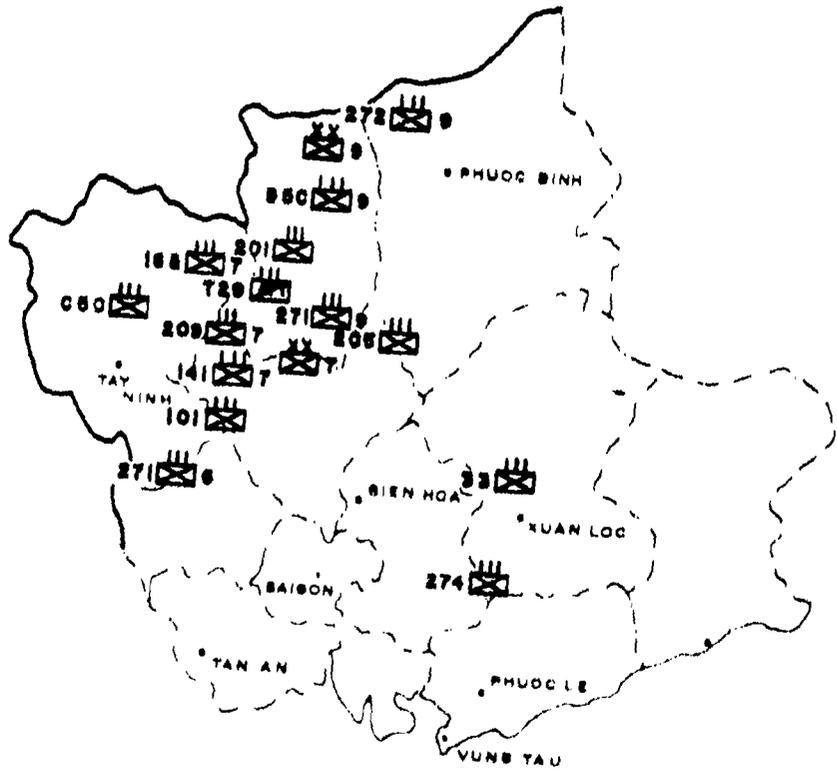
Figure: A-18

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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 3 (28 JAN 73)



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Figure: A-20

A-25

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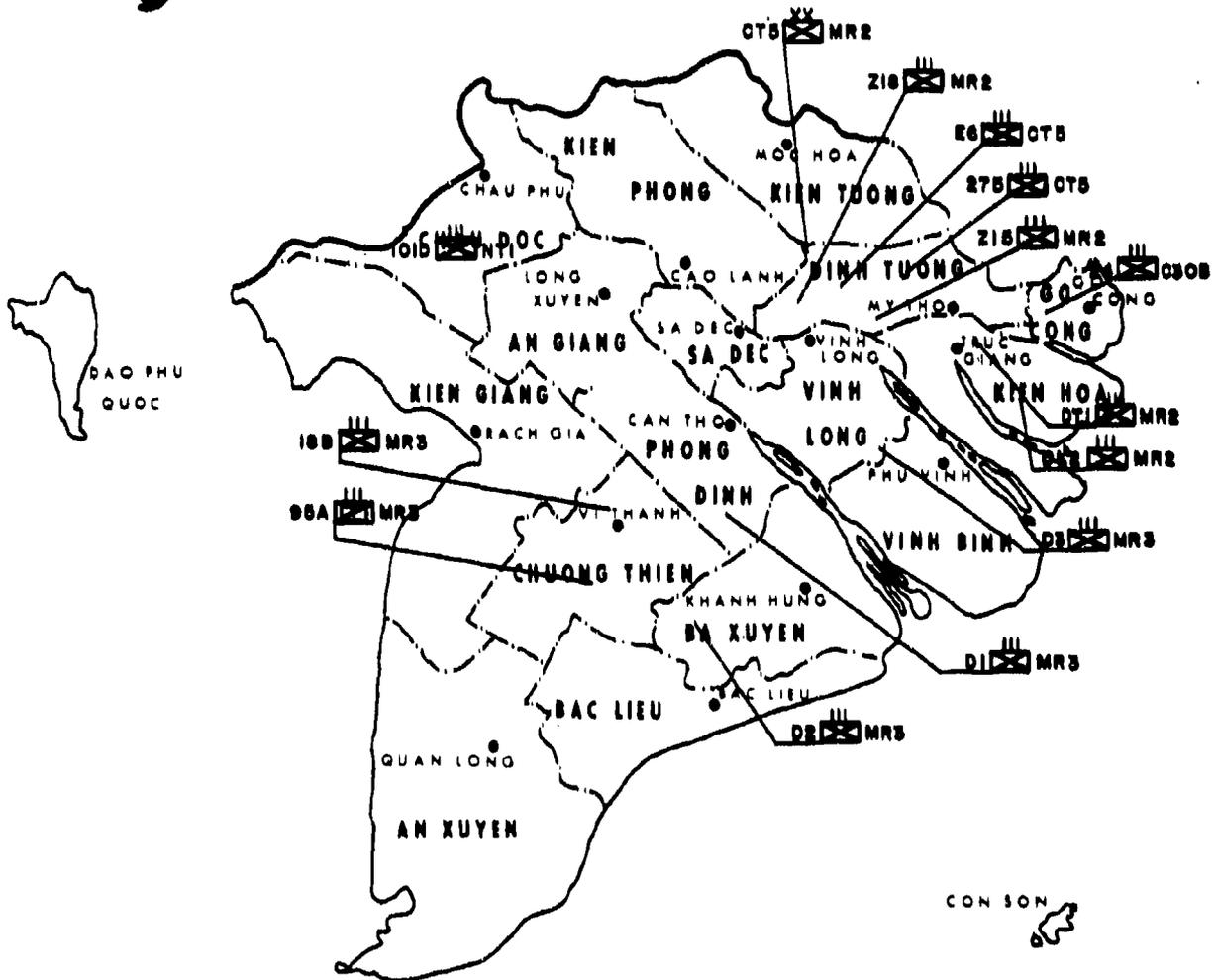
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4

(JAN 72)



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Figure: A-21

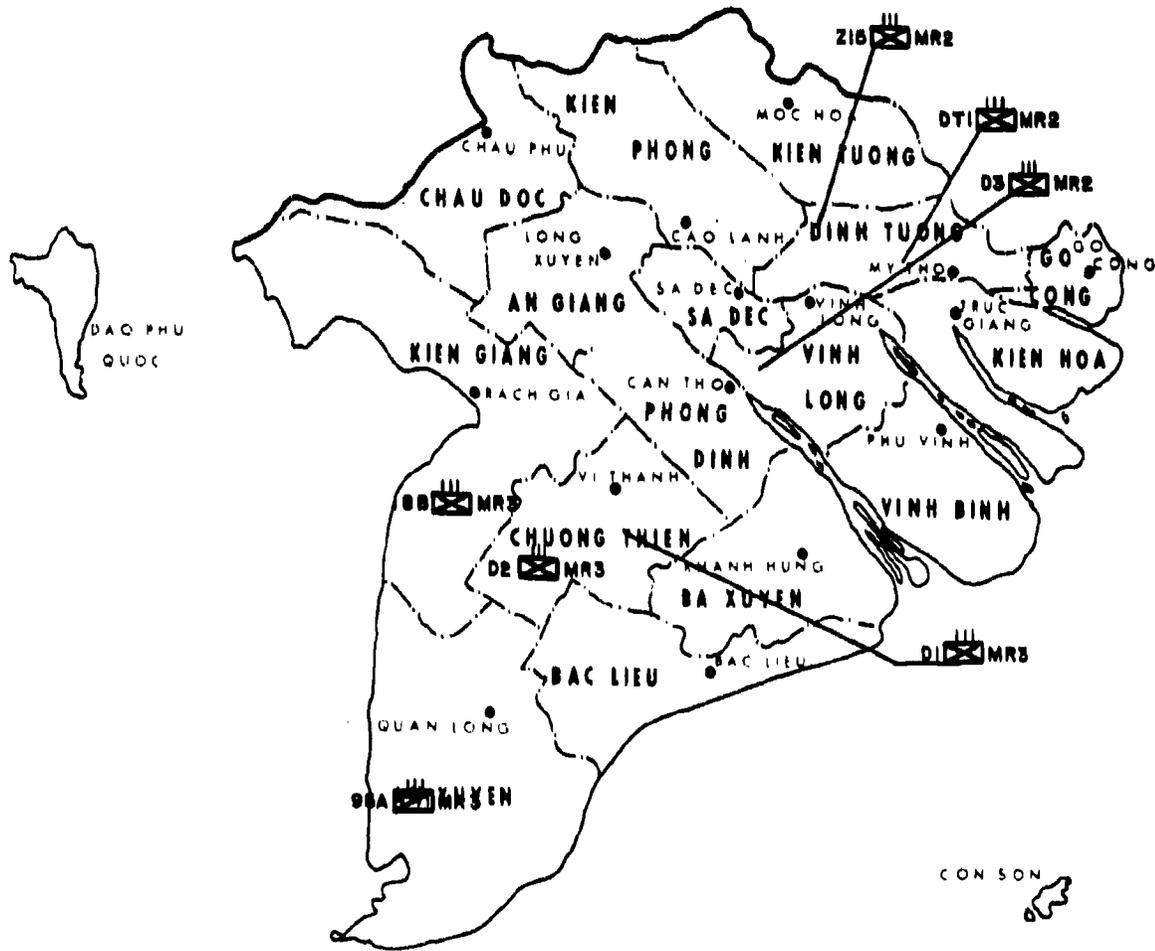
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4

(MAR 78)



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Figure: A-22

A-27

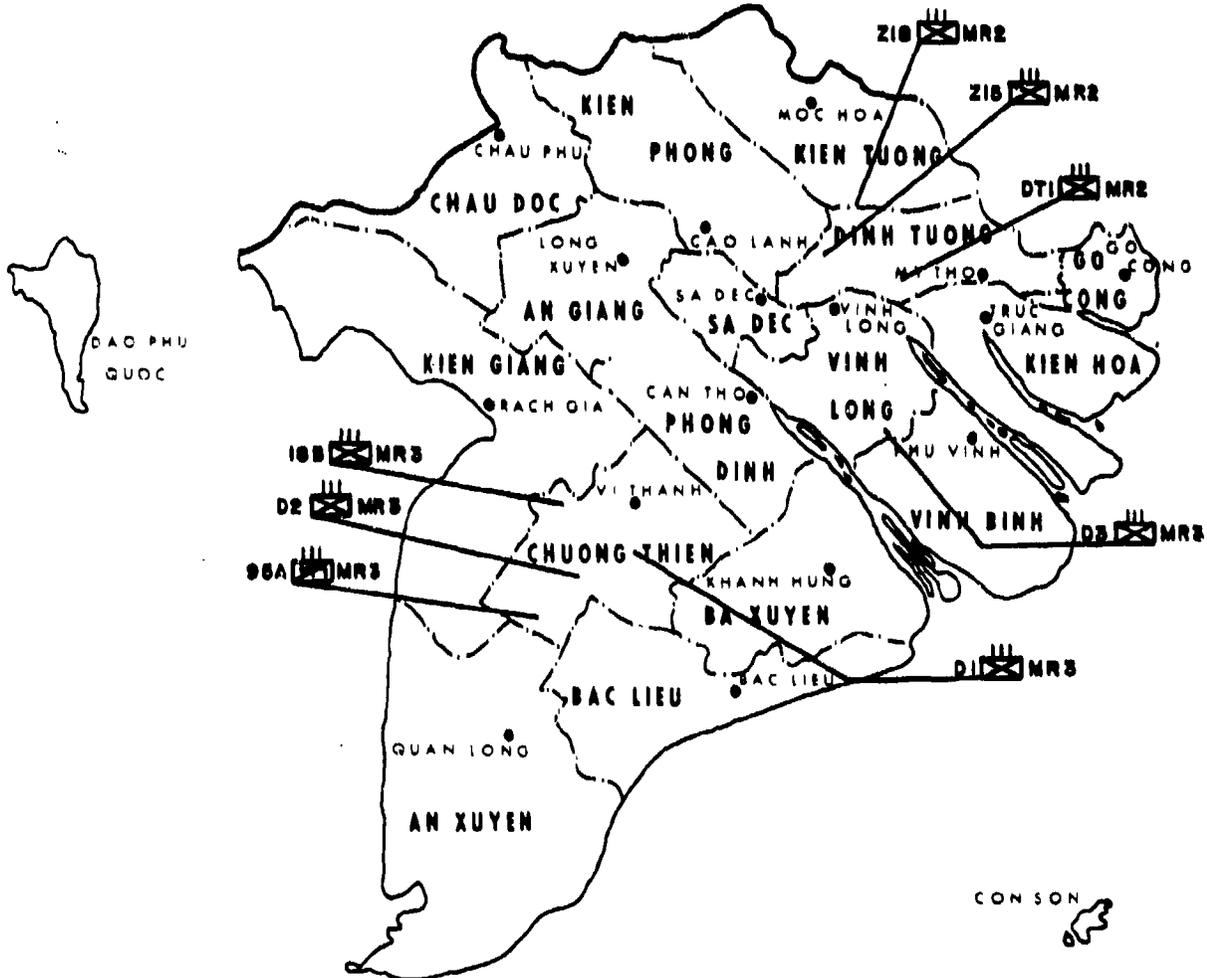
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4

(JUL 72)



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Figure: A-23

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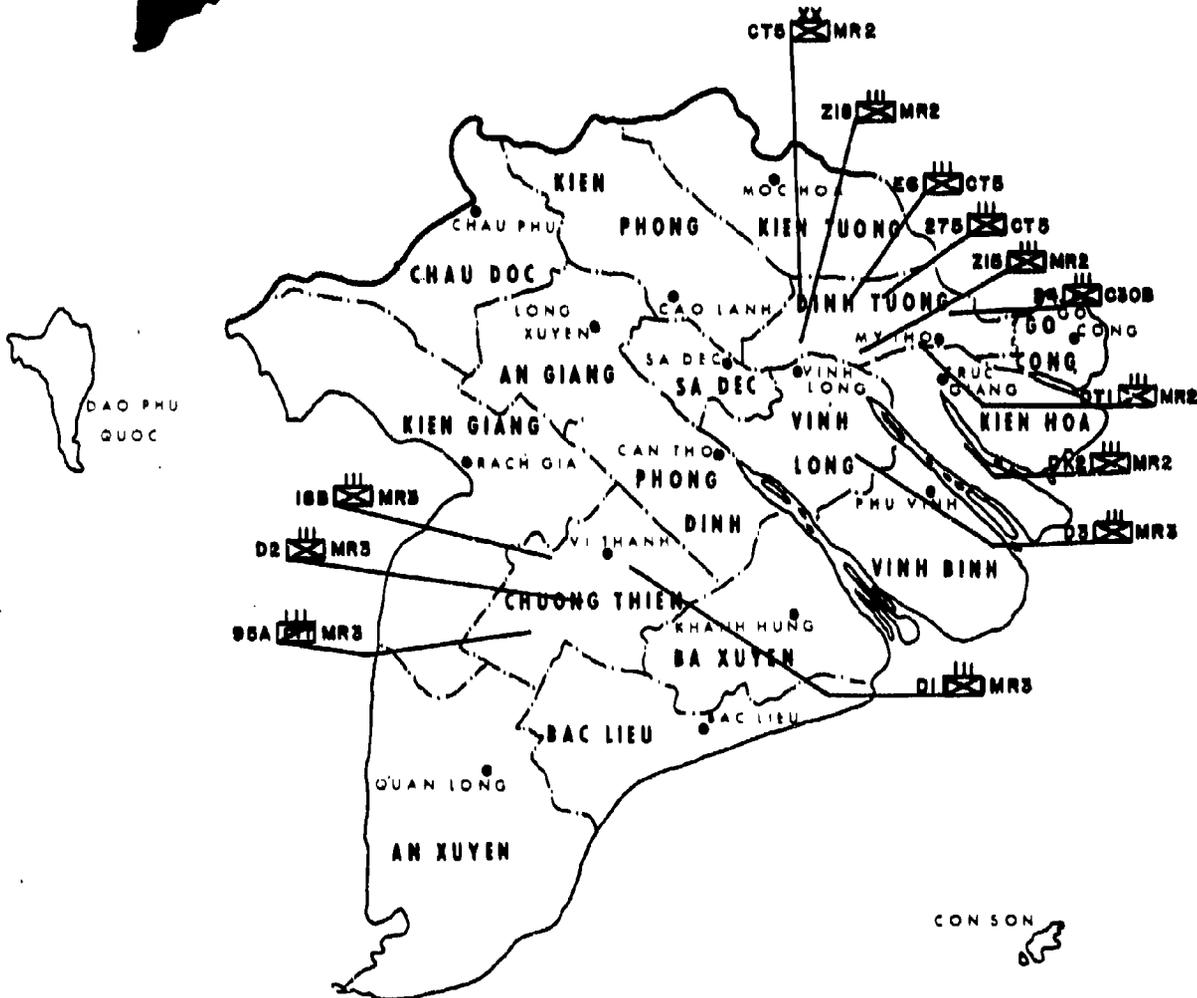
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4

(SEP 72)



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Figure: A-24

A-29

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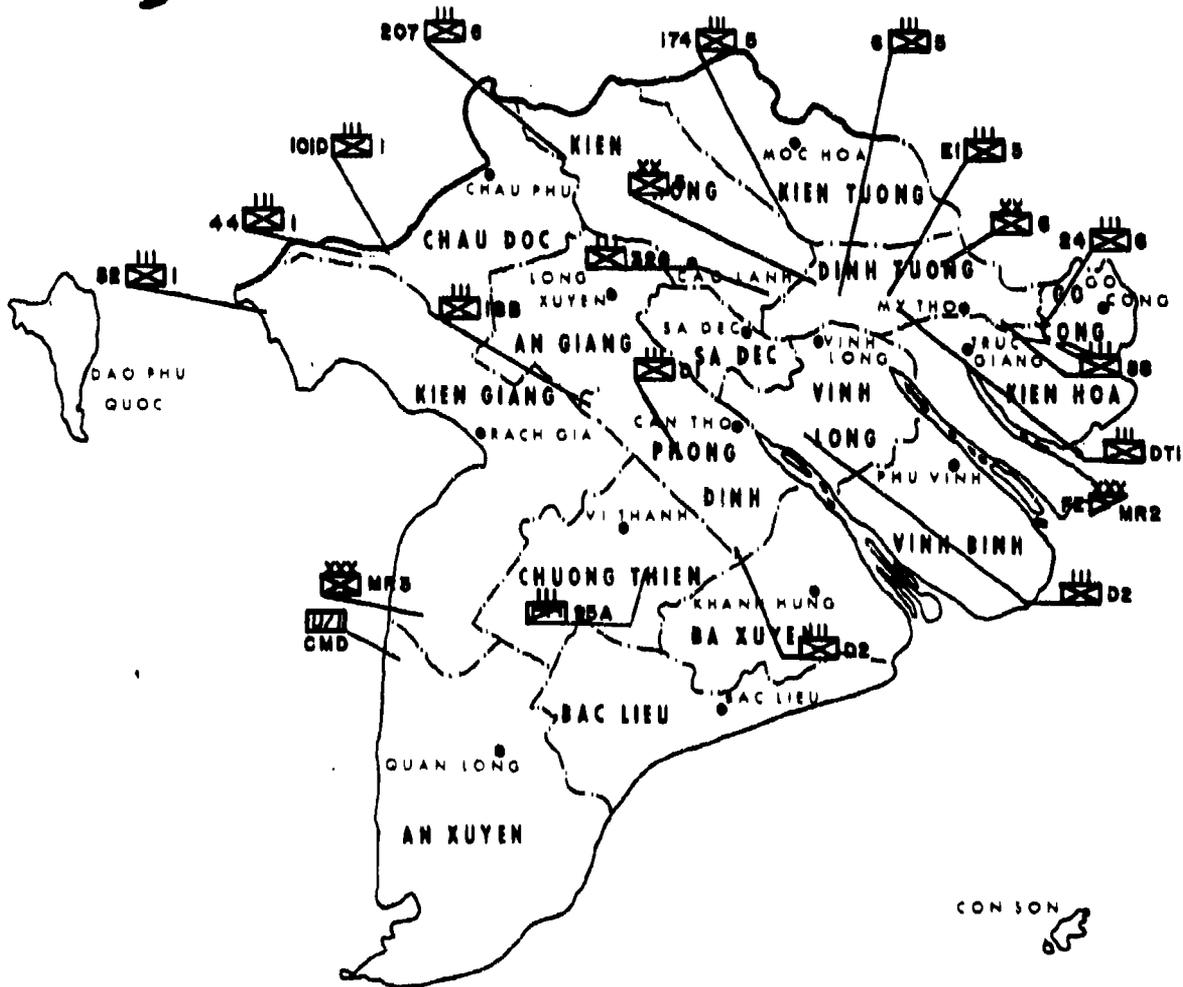
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4

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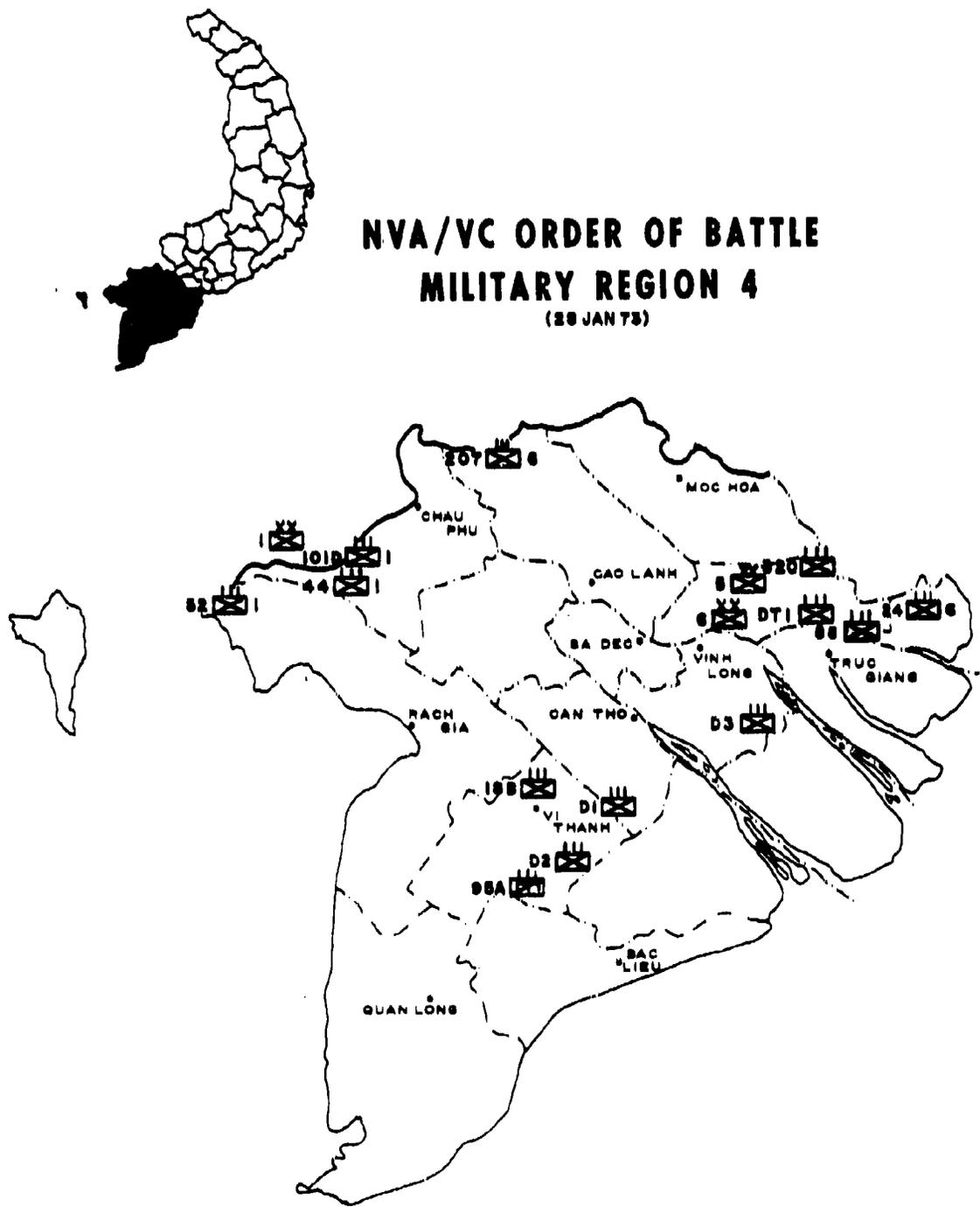
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NVA/VC ORDER OF BATTLE MILITARY REGION 4 (28 JAN 73)

Source: MACDI

Figure: A-26

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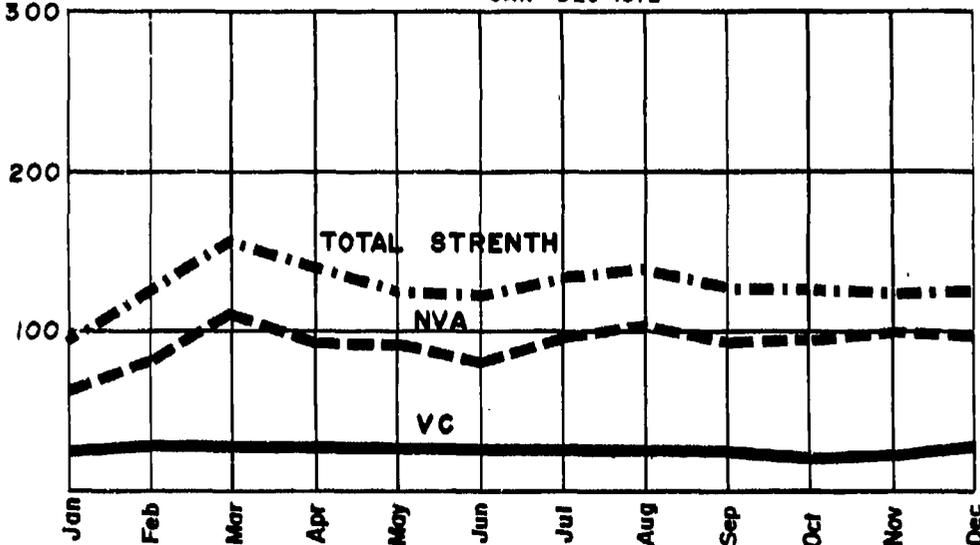
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Personnel
(1000s)
300

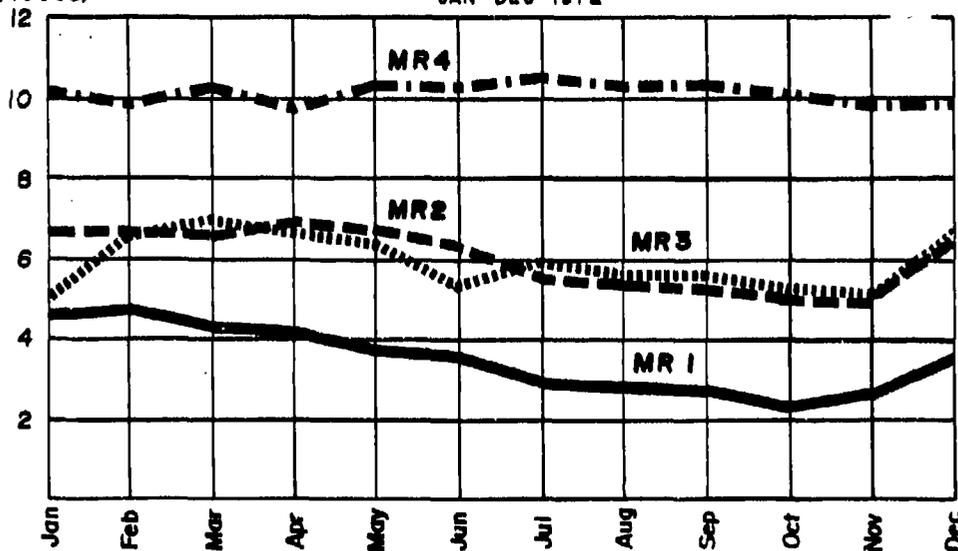
NVA/VC COMBAT PERSONNEL IN RVN
JAN-DEC 1972



NOTE: Total strength includes NVA infantry, other maneuver, combat support, administrative service support, plus VC separate co/pit and guerrilla forces

Personnel
(1000s)

VC COMBAT PERSONNEL STRENGTH BY RVN MR
JAN-DEC 1972



NOTE: Totals include infantry, other maneuver, combat support, separate co/pit and guerrilla force personnel

Source: MACDI

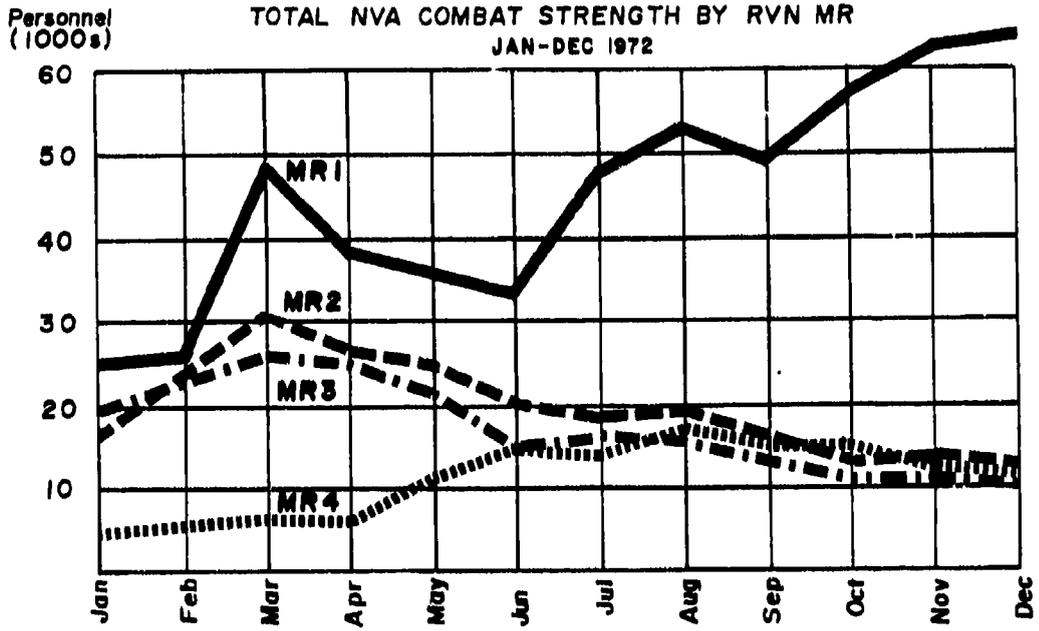
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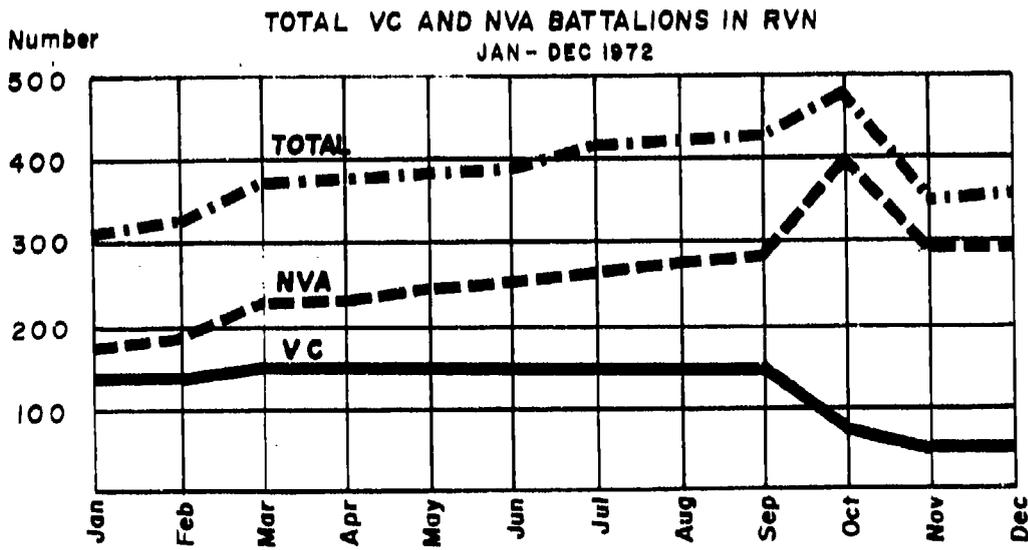
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NOTE: Totals include infantry, other maneuver and combat support personnel



NOTE: Totals include infantry, other maneuver and combat support battalions

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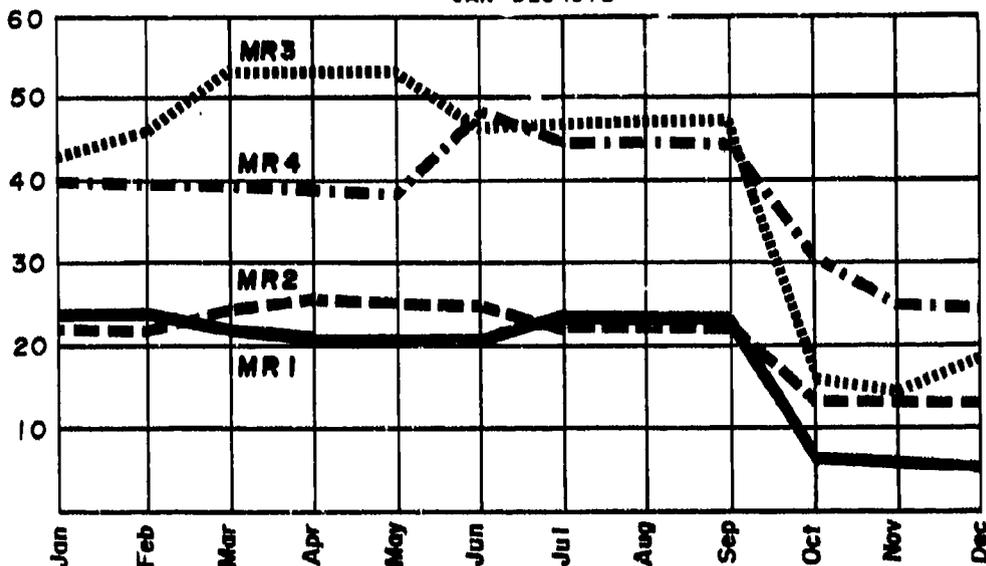
Figure: A-28

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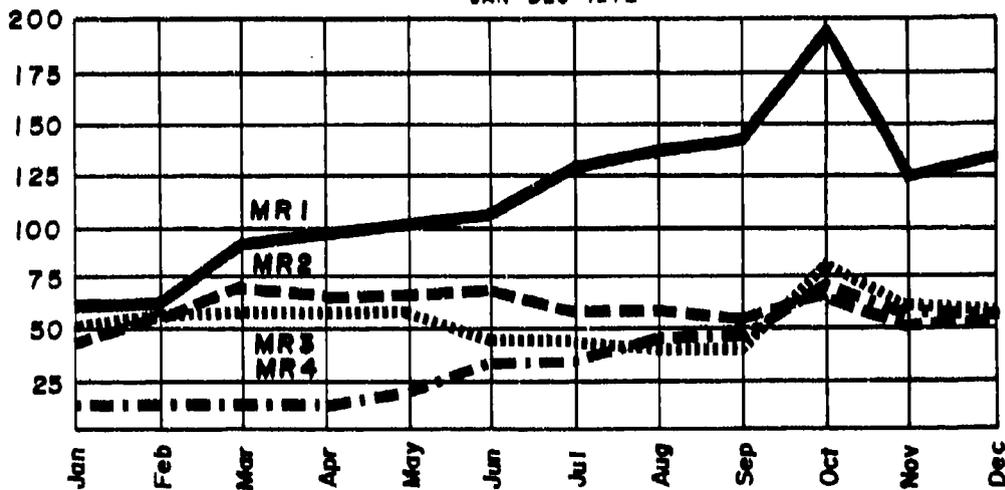
**TOTAL VC BATTALIONS BY RVN MR
JAN-DEC 1972**



NOTE: Totals include infantry, other maneuver and combat support battalions

Number

**TOTAL NVA BATTALIONS BY RVN MR
JAN-DEC 1972**



NOTE: Totals include infantry, other maneuver and combat support battalions

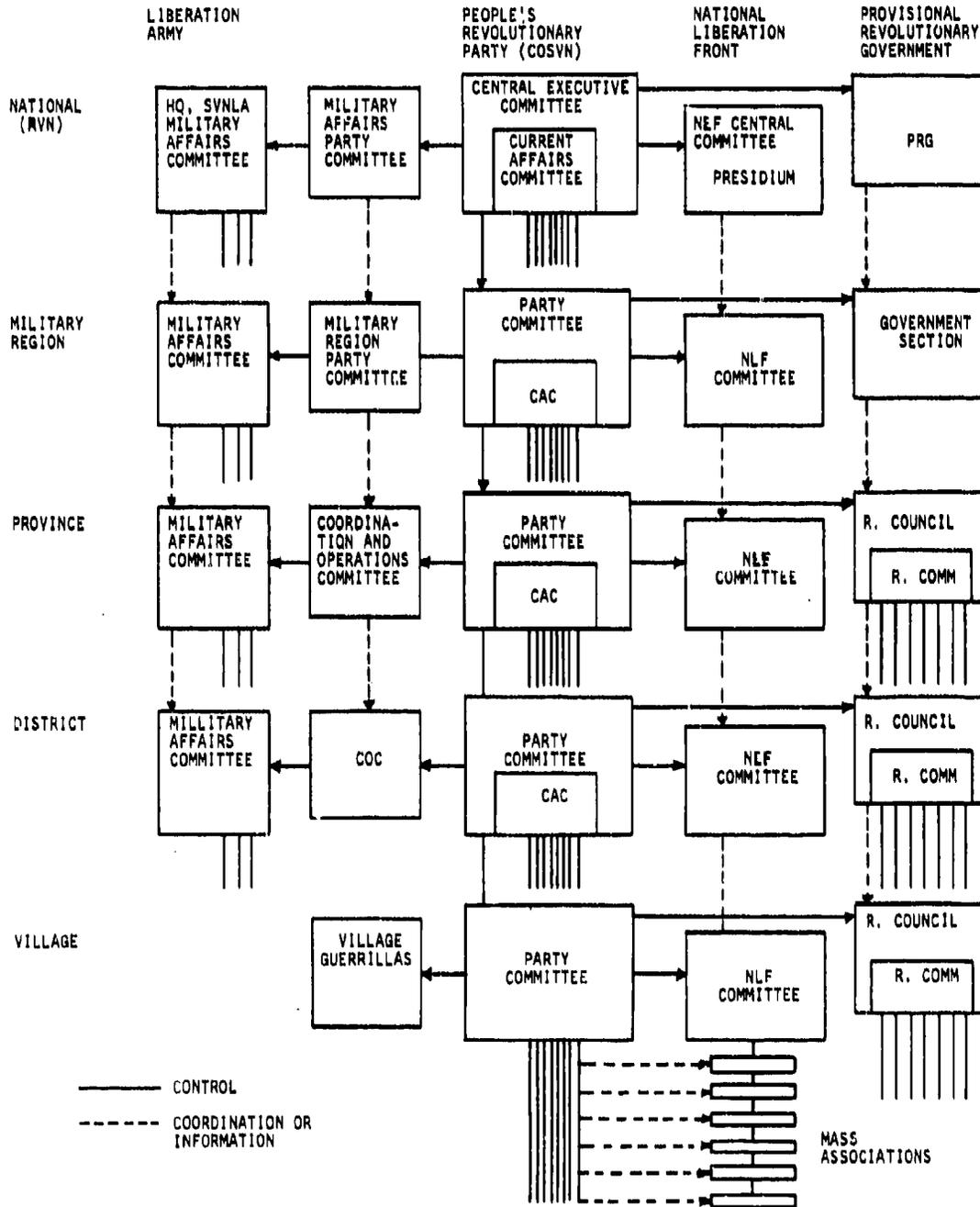
Source: MACDI

Figure: A-29

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VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST ORGANIZATION FOR SOUTH VIETNAM



Source: MACDI

Figure: A-30

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of North Vietnam. The term VCI was applied to both the organizational structures and party personnel filling key positions within the structures. Generally stated, the VCI had two missions. In the military sphere it was tasked to provide military units with money, food, recruits, intelligence, refuge, and guides. Politically, it was to prepare for an eventual Communist assumption of power through an organization which would replace the government of South Vietnam.

(C/NF) At the highest level Communist activities in South Vietnam were controlled by the PRP through the political and military staff organization known as COSVN. The exact relationship of COSVN/PRP with the North Vietnamese Communist Party remained unclear. Available evidence indicated that the PRP worked closely with the Lao Dong Party (Communist Party of North Vietnam). Many of the influential COSVN cadre, while South Vietnamese, were Lao Dong Party members who concurrently occupied responsible political positions in both North and South Vietnam.

(C) In 1960 the Communists formed the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF) as a political front organization to attract non-Communist support. Associated with the NLF were numerous mass organizations designed to place large segments of the South Vietnamese populace under Communist influence.

(C) In 1961 the NLF announced the formation of a military arm, the South Vietnam National Liberation Army (SVNLA). In reality, the SVNLA was controlled by COSVN, providing the organization and leadership required by VC military forces in the South.

(C) The People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), formed in 1969, was described by the Communists as an administrative body enjoying greater ability and popular support than the government of the Republic of Vietnam. Although this was not true, the Communists continually attempted to increase their popular support and administrative capabilities. From 1971 the PRG was important in strengthening Communist claims to legitimacy in South Vietnam. In addition, it increased the Communist following and support outside the South, enabling them to use the international arena and particularly the Paris peace talks to effectively present their policies and propaganda.

(C/NF) It was generally believed that COSVN had both political and military responsibility for all

of South Vietnam south from and including VC Military Regions 6 and 10, corresponding to the Government of South Vietnam's Military Regions 3 and 4 and the southern portion of Military Region 2 (Fig A-1). All the political and military direction for these areas passed from COSVN to subordinate echelons through channels controlled by the PRP. But the chain of command in the northern part of the country (VC Military Region 5, the B-3 Front, and MR TTH) was not as clearly delineated. Apparently, both COSVN and Hanoi communicated with VC Military Region 5 and the B-3 Front; Hanoi controlled the military activities, while COSVN provided the political guidance.²⁰

(C) The thrust of Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) activity during 1972 was closely aligned with and supplemented by enemy military efforts. The beginning of 1972 found the VCI weak both quantitatively and qualitatively, and as a result initial emphasis was placed on cadre indoctrination. Recruitment and proselytism were stressed in an attempt to develop a political base sufficient to support planned enemy initiatives. Additionally, much emphasis was placed on taxation and logistical efforts throughout 1972, with limited success.

(C) During the initial stages of the offensive, the VCI exploited enemy successes through massive propaganda and proselyting activities. "Liberation governments" were also established in enemy controlled areas in an effort to administer the activities of the populace in these areas. During the latter half of the year, as the Thieu government counter-attacked and regained control of lost areas, the infrastructure suffered significant losses both in personnel and cadre motivation.

(C) By September emphasis began shifting from support of military activities to plans and preparations for a politically oriented struggle. The main thrust of these activities included propagandizing the populace to support the Viet Cong, military proselyting in an attempt to persuade RVNAF personnel to desert, preparation of VC flags, and planned assassination of Republic of Vietnam officials, combined with attempts to infiltrate VC cadre into South Vietnam's administrative organizations. As 1972 drew to a close, the Viet Cong Infrastructure remained weak. Its ability to maintain a viable organization continued to suffer primarily as a result of a loss in popular support, and its ability to effectively operate in populated areas was therefore limited.²¹

INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY SERVICES

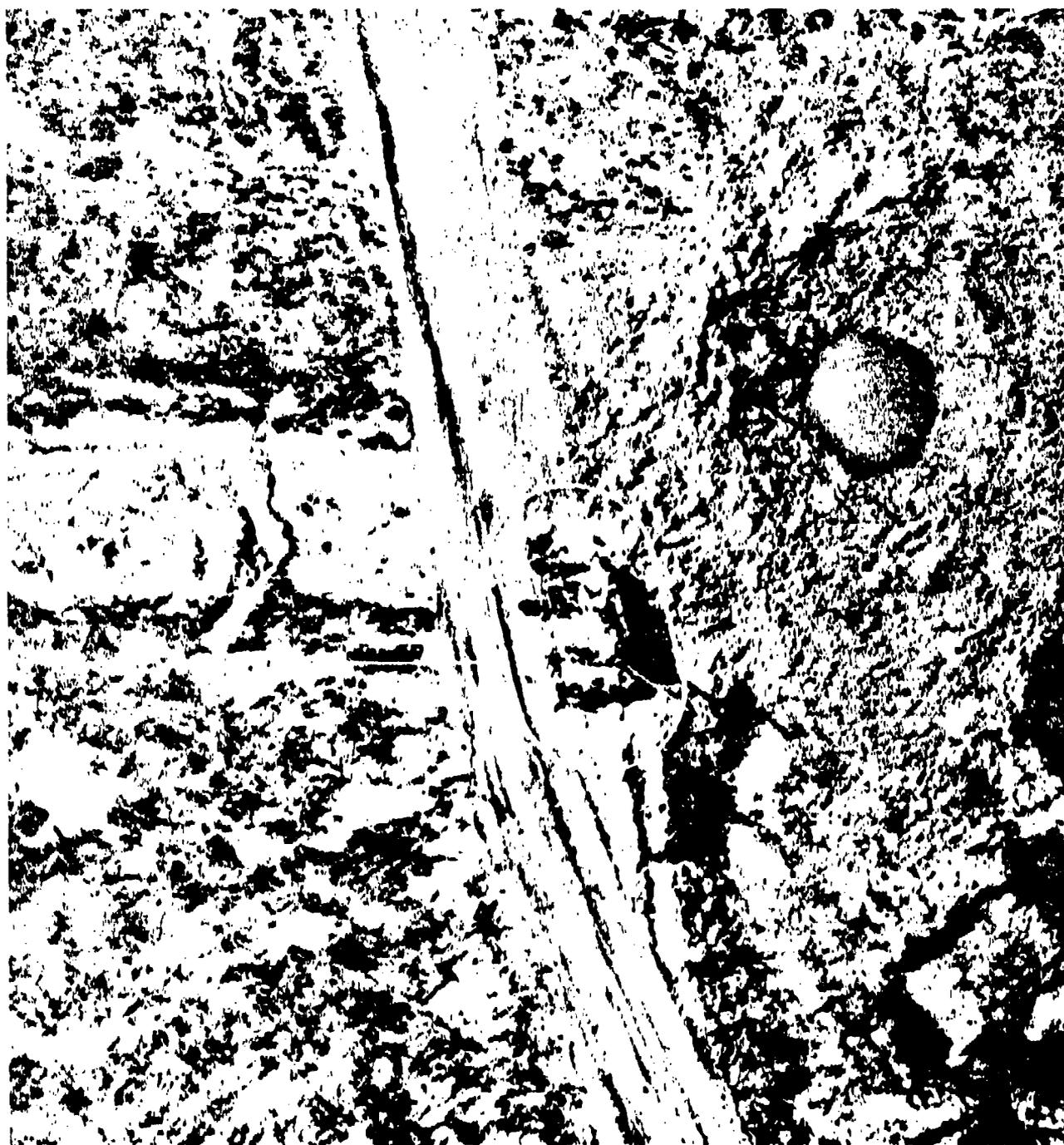
(S/NF) The mission of the enemy in South Vietnam was to overthrow the Thieu regime, establish

a coalition government, and unite North Vietnam and South Vietnam under Communist control. North

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This Russian-built North Vietnamese T-54/55 tank, disabled by an air attack 15 miles south of the DMZ, stands helpless, covered with mud. Scores of tanks, spearheading the North Vietnamese invasion across the DMZ into Quang Tri Province, were destroyed or damaged by fighter bombers of the Vietnamese and U.S. Air Forces.

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Vietnam controlled this effort directly and through COSVN, which in turn controlled the South Vietnam Liberation Army (SVNLA), National Liberation Front (NLF), Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG), and the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI). Communist intelligence and security organizations supported the enemy's mission in several areas of activity. The intelligence organization collected and produced strategic and tactical intelligence through penetration, reconnaissance, and communication intercept operations; the security organizations engaged in security investigations, maintenance of party discipline, espionage, subversion, counterespionage, sabotage, terrorism, and abductions. The intelligence services directed their efforts against the South Vietnamese and US Military Forces, while the security services were targeted against deviates from the Communist fold and South Vietnamese and US intelligence and security forces. The three major entities which controlled intelligence or security operations against friendly forces were the North Vietnamese Strategic Intelligence and Security Services, the North Vietnamese Security Service, and the COSVN Intelligence and Security Services. These agencies were directed against strategic long-range targets as well as tactical short-term objectives. The backbone of the COSVN intelligence and security organizations was the party command line extending from the Lao Dong party in Hanoi through COSVN to the lowest echelons of the Viet Cong Infrastructure. Selected elements of the Viet Cong Infrastructure indirectly supported the North Vietnamese and COSVN directed intelligence and security services. The Party Committees at various echelons of the Viet Cong Infrastructure used the intelligence and security information collected to direct the activities of their respective military units.

NORTH VIETNAMESE SECURITY SERVICE (AN NINH)

(S/NF) The North Vietnamese Ministry of Public Security functioned in South Vietnam through the An Ninh, or Security Service. It was estimated that the An Ninh had between 10,000 and 15,000 people in South Vietnam in 1972. There were An Ninh Security Sections at every level of VC organization, from the 500-man section at COSVN Headquarters to 3-man sections at village level.

(S/NF) Primarily a counterintelligence organization, the An Ninh was responsible for party discipline and personnel security within the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP). It functioned overtly as an internal security agency in VC and NVA controlled areas. In areas under South Vietnamese control, it provided the security for the VCI; compiled black and white lists; performed espionage, counterespionage, terrorism, abductions, and assassinations;

and produced local situation reports. Penetration of the South Vietnamese Government and its intelligence and security agencies were among the An Ninh's aggressive espionage and counterintelligence efforts. As required, it also furnished assistance in the collection of tactical intelligence.

(S/NF) Although conventional military operations and the South's pacification program attempted to weaken the An Ninh, the service remained effective and retained a substantial capability to safeguard the reliability of enemy forces and to conduct intelligence, counterintelligence and terrorist operations against allied forces.

(S) The Military Security Element which formed part of the political staff department of each military unit functioned as the military counterintelligence and security arm of that unit and represented the extension of the An Ninh within the military structure. Since the Military Security Elements were subordinate to the political staff of the SVNLA, important functions were the preservation of party discipline and security within NVA and VC forces.

NORTH VIETNAMESE CENTRAL RESEARCH AGENCY (CUC NGHIEN CUU)

(S/NF) Strategic intelligence was the province of Cuc Nghien Cuu (CNC), an agency of the North Vietnamese Ministry of Defense. Its targets were South Vietnamese, Free World Forces, and other countries considered important to the national security of North Vietnam and the furtherance of her national objectives. In 1972 the CNC was controlled by the Defense Ministry, but was also tasked directly by the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party. The CNC provided finished intelligence, not only to its parent ministry, but to the highest policy-making levels of the North Vietnamese Government. Its school in North Vietnam also gave advanced training to military intelligence personnel not members of the CNC.

(S/NF) The CNC's mission was to provide the highest policy-making levels of the Hanoi regime with strategic intelligence and to advance national objectives by political action in countries of interest. The CNC was charged with conducting training, research, and clandestine operations incident to the accomplishment of this mission. In addition to its primary functions of management, collection, evaluation, and dissemination of strategic intelligence, the CNC also provided some tactical intelligence support to Communist forces throughout Indochina. It provided combat intelligence training and advanced general military intelligence training for NVA personnel assigned to the Indochina theaters of operations as well as to its own personnel.

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(S/NF) The organization of the CNC was as shown in Figure A-31.

(S/NF) In 1972 the CNC was capable of continued high level penetration operations, collection of tactical intelligence as a secondary mission, and continued high quality training for CNC trainees and other NVA intelligence personnel. CNC modus operandi called for the use of agents with well documented legal residence status in Government of Vietnam controlled areas. In accordance with the delegation of responsibility to COSVN for the control of the southern half of the South (from Military Regions 6 and 10 south), the CNC transferred some of its assets to South Vietnam under the control of COSVN's Strategic Intelligence Office.

COSVN INTELLIGENCE ORGANIZATIONS

(S) COSVN efforts were carried on by three elements: the Strategic Intelligence Office (SIO), also known as B-22 or J-22; the Military Intelligence Office (MIO), also known as B-2; and the Military Proselyting Sections.

(S) B-22 (SIO) located in COSVN was an important element of the CNC in South Vietnam, responsible for operations in South Vietnam's Military Regions 3 and 4. It was directly subordinate to CNC, Hanoi, but had reporting responsibility to the Current Affairs Committee of COSVN, to the Military Affairs Party Committee of the SVNLA, and primarily to the CNC Headquarters in Hanoi. The SIO thus had access to top enemy military and political decision-making bodies in South Vietnam. The SIO had the primary mission of collecting high level military, political, diplomatic, and economic information concerning South Vietnam and the conduct of political action against the South Vietnamese Government. To accomplish these missions, the SIO worked through penetration agents at the most sensitive levels of the South Vietnamese governmental structure. SIO agents included two members of the Chamber of Deputies and an advisor to the President of the Republic. Being largely an outgrowth of the CNC, B-22's modus operandi was substantially the same as that of the North Vietnamese agency. The SIO and the CNC continued to be the two most sophisticated and competent of the enemy intelligence agencies.

(S) COSVN's tactical intelligence requirements were satisfied by a number of units and specialized organizations. The agency exercising overall control was the Phong Quan Bao, Military Intelligence Office (MIO), designated B-2. The MIO was responsible for collection of tactical military information on RVNAF, US Armed Forces, and other Free World Forces in South Vietnam. The MIO headquarters was located in COSVN and operated under COSVN, but also received operational policy guidance from

the CNC in Hanoi. MIO had supervisory staff control over all the military intelligence sections assigned to VC military regions, sub-regions, provinces, districts, cities, and villages. It received military information collected by all these units, including that gathered by the People's Intelligence Units assigned to the MIO components cited. Aside from its supervisory responsibility over the intelligence units at all levels of the VCI, MIO had an operational responsibility which it exercised through its operational arm in the collection of information through the use of agents, physical reconnaissance, and the interception of voice and Morse code communications of RVNAF, US and other Free World Forces. Reconnaissance, penetration of RVNAF, US, and other allied military installations, and communication interceptions were the MIO's primary activities. The information obtained by MIO was used in the planning of VC military operations.

(S) It was estimated that about 4,000 personnel were involved in COSVN's communications intelligence effort, conducted by the Technical Reconnaissance Units (TRU) of the respective MI components and of MIO. The TRUs ranged in size from four man teams to larger units with intercept, deciphering, translating, and recording capabilities. TRUs were deployed where they could react immediately to intelligence derived from allied tactical voice communications. They submitted spot reports regarding sweeps, heliborne operations, tactical airstrikes, and artillery missions. Captured training documents and notebooks stressed attention to allied communications security violations. Deception operations, particularly misdirection of airstrikes and artillery fire against friendly troops, were also attempted. The enemy used captured US tactical radios augmented by large numbers of commercial and Chinese Communist military radios.

(S) The military proselyting activities of the Party apparatus were directed by the Propaganda and Training Department (Cue Tuyen Huan) of the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party. Military proselyting activities were directed by the military proselyting sections found at all levels of the infrastructure from region to village and occasionally at hamlet level. At provincial level military proselyting activities were directed by the military proselyting section of the Party Committee and by the military proselyting elements of the military units. The party military proselyting objective at all levels was to engage all possible individuals in military proselyting activities: civilians, military men, their families, women, students, and anyone else who could serve the overall purpose of successfully influencing members of the RVNAF to surrender, to defect, or to lay down their arms.²⁴

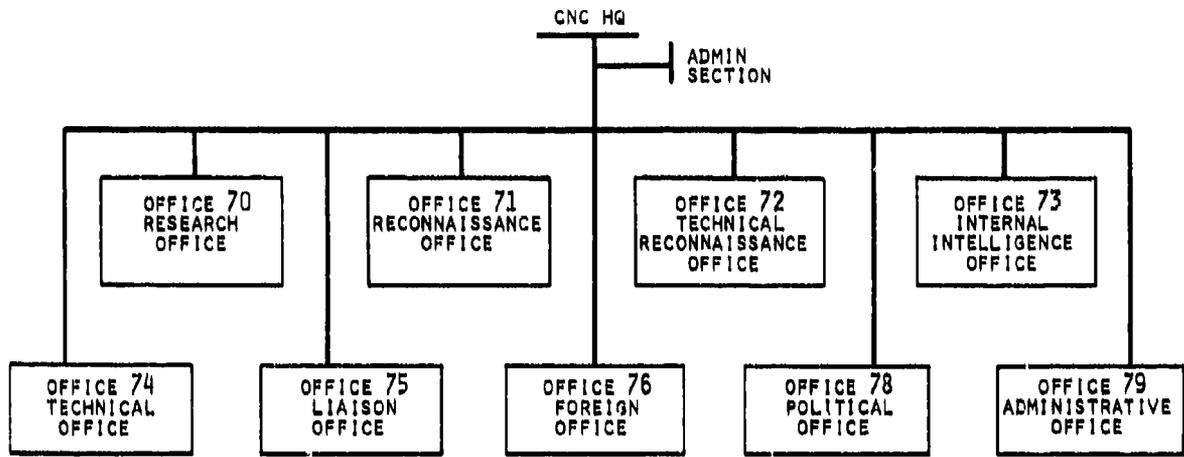
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SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

RECRUITMENT

(C) In 1972 North Vietnamese manpower resources in the 15 to 49 age group were 4,850,000 males, of which 2,750,000 were fit for military service. A quarter of this group was young men aged 15 to 19. The number of males reaching age 17 annually was 220,000 of which 143,000 were considered fit for service and added to the conscription pool.²⁰

(C) The 1972 enemy offensive resulted in heavy losses which forced the enemy to adopt numerous steps to increase the manpower available to replace combatants lost in fighting.²⁰ Among these steps were lower physical standards for the draft, expansion of age groups drafted, and tighter control of absentees and deserters. In the attempt to make up for heavy personnel losses suffered during the 1972 offensive an abduction campaign was initiated in NVA occupied areas of South Vietnam. Youths in these areas, such as Quang Tri and northern Binh Dinh Provinces, were forcibly impressed into the NVA. There were also isolated cases of ARVN deserting to the NVA during engagements and more frequently of the NVA's capture of ARVN, RF/PF, and People's Self Defense Force (PSDF) soldiers for use as replacements in NVA main force units that were under strength. Additionally, civilians, both students and evacuees in North Vietnam and those in occupied parts of South Vietnam, were used in rear services and transportation roles to free others for combat.²¹ No figures were available for the number of individuals in these groups recruited or impressed into service by the NVA.

(S) In 1972, despite being harassed during a decade of air and artillery bombardment and occasional ground operations, the enemy was able to maintain a steady flow of supplies and personnel replacements to his combat units throughout Indochina. While actions such as the coordinated bombing and mining of the harbors and rivers caused delays and harassment during critical periods, no long-term formula for the successful interdiction of infiltration routes had been developed.

NVA/VC LOGISTICS ORGANIZATION

(C) The staff element with overall responsibility for personnel and logistical support of the NVA throughout Indochina was the General Directorate of Rear Services, one of three directorates of the NVA High Command. The functions of the High Command were similar to those of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Directorate handled the movement of large military units; procurement and distribution of weapons, equipment, and supplies; and the construction of military establishments.

Subordinate to it were three Rear Service Transportation Groups: the 500th, the 559th, and the 470th. Of the three groups, the 500th was responsible for the movement of personnel and supplies within North Vietnam; the others were responsible for out-of-country operations.²² The 559th Transportation Group had the mission of transportation of personnel and supplies from North Vietnam to Laos and South Vietnam, as well as construction, protection, and maintenance of lines of communication and installations.²³ The functions of the 470th Transportation Group were believed similar to the 559th, while its area of operations extended from the Bolovens Plateau in Laos to Stoeng Treng in Cambodia. In 1972 it was estimated that the 470th operated four to five Binh Trams which transported supplies received from the 559th Transportation Group in Laos into the B-3 Front.²⁴ The 470th also transported rice from the Kratie area of Cambodia to NVA/VC units in southern Laos and the B-3 Front.

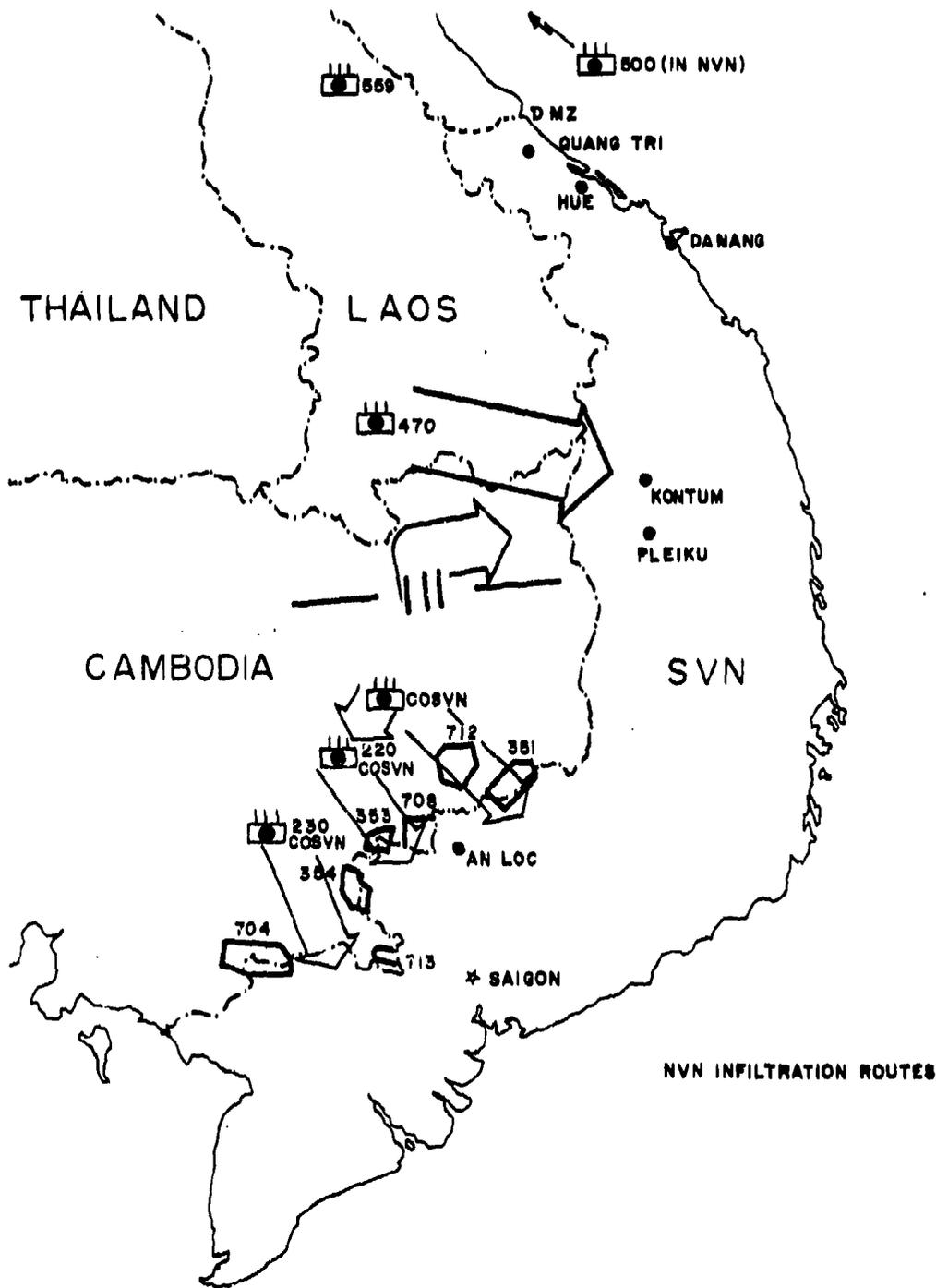
(S) The transfer of personnel and material from the Kratie area of Cambodia to South Vietnam's Military Regions 3 and 4 was the responsibility of COSVN Rear Service Groups. In 1972, one had been identified and it was believed two others existed. The 230th had the probable mission of moving material from the Chup Plantation (Fig. A-32) southward to Base Areas 354, 713, and 704. Further north it was believed the 220th had as its mission the transshipment of supplies from the Ph Chhlong or Kompong Cham area on the Mekong River, south to the Chup Plantation or southeast to Base Areas 353 and 708. It was assumed that there was another rear service group in Kratie that was possibly responsible for the movement of supplies south to Ph Chhlong/Kompong Cham and from there southward to Base Areas 712 and 351 in South Vietnam.²⁵ In addition to these groups seaborne attempts to infiltrate war materiel into the South were the responsibility of the North Vietnamese 125th Naval Transportation Group which maintained an inventory of at least 35 trawlers.²⁶

(S/NF) Within the Republic of Vietnam the so-called "shadow supply system" operated by the VCI played an important role in the covert local procurement of funds and supplies for enemy political organizations and military units. The core of the shadow supply system included lower echelon rear service groups, VCI staffed finance and economy sections and forward supply councils. The rear service groups functioned under enemy military regions and fronts and had specific areas of operations. The mission of a rear service group was to receive, store, and transport materiel; collect taxes; and purchase supplies locally. The finance

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A camouflaged Communist surface-to-air missile (SAM) electronics van was photographed by USAF reconnaissance aircraft on 29 March 1972 on a spur of the Ho Chi Minh trail north of Tchepone, Laos.

and economy sections at region and sub-region levels planned and managed manufacturing of materiel and food production. They also were the primary collection and allocation agencies of money and provisions. At district levels, these sections determined when and where to tax the population in order to meet financial objectives. Forward supply councils were subordinate to current affairs committees at all echelons and coordinated activities between finance and economy sections and rear service groups. Councils at each echelon obtained porters, litter bearers, and other logistical support personnel mainly by exploiting the population. Forward supply councils also managed the entry and exit points of areas where supplies purchased on the open market were cached for future dis-

tribution. Councils were staffed jointly by VCI civilians from the finance and economy sections and military personnel from rear service group staffs.³⁷

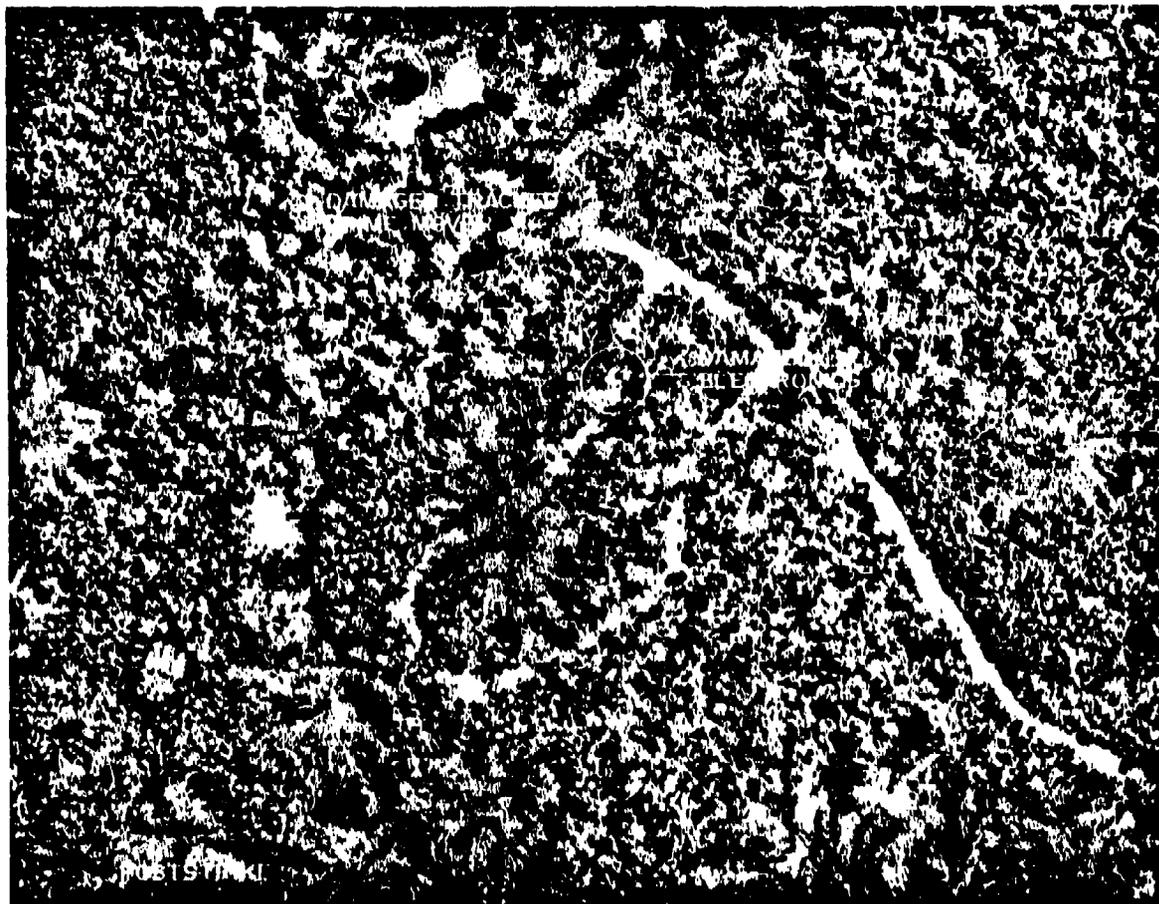
FACILITIES

(S) The backbone of the enemy infiltration network was the Binh Tram or Military Station. Generally of regimental size, they were command and control agencies operating within a specific geographic area. Their primary mission was the expeditious movement of men and materiel through their areas of responsibility. Each Binh Tram normally had subordinate to it an infantry company for internal security, two engineer battalions for construction and maintenance of lines of com-

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A follow-up strike the next day by USAF F-4 fighter bombers damaged the van and a tracked prime mover which was used to move surface-to-air missiles (SAMS) along the trail.

munication, two transportation battalions to transfer supplies from one Binh Tram to another, two to three AAA battalions for defense against air attack, a commo-liaison battalion to maintain commo-liaison stations and assist in personnel movement, and where appropriate, a water transportation battalion.³⁴

(C) Within each Binh Tram were one or more Lien Trams or interstations which doubled as commo-liaison stations and were believed responsible for the operation of two or more commo-liaison stations which controlled personnel and supply movement. To carry out this mission the Lien Trams were located near the middle of their sector of responsibility. They differed from commo-liaison stations in that they had storage facilities for food which was supplied to the infiltration groups and

were located near medical facilities which could be used by the infiltration groups. Because of increased responsibilities and security they were manned by larger units than commo-liaison stations, possibly up to battalion size units.³⁵ Infiltration of both personnel and materiel followed the same basic routes. Personnel movement was via the Binh Tram system from commo-liaison station to commo-liaison station. Materiel was transported separately from transshipment point to transshipment point, all of which were located in close proximity to commo-liaison stations.

(C) NVA/VC base areas (Fig. A-33) were sections of terrain located along traditional infiltration routes extending from the Laotian Panhandle south to Cambodia and South Vietnam. They contained installations, defensive fortifications, and

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other physical structures used for the training of personnel and units; for political, military, or logistical headquarters; and for storage and distribution of supplies.⁴⁰

OUTSIDE THE REPUBLIC

(S) The enemy's logistics activities began with the import of war materials from other Communist bloc countries. Before the mining of North Vietnam's ports and harbors, vast quantities of war materials were brought in by sea. After the mining, however, the North Vietnamese were forced to satisfy their requirements by importing supplies across the North Vietnamese/Chinese border. Supply movement from China to North Vietnam was accomplished by every means available to the enemy. Trucks were utilized along the intricate road system; barges and other watercraft were active along all the major and minor waterways; and the rail system, where repaired, was used to facilitate the movement of materiel.

(S) Photography revealed that the North Vietnamese dispersed their storage warehouses in prefabricated buildings resembling villages. These prefabricated buildings were in most cases located in close proximity to populated areas. Photography and agent reports both indicated that North Vietnam relocated its war related factories into other facilities, such as schools, hospitals, and churches. Additionally, photography revealed that the North Vietnamese were storing their supplies along dikes.⁴¹

(S) Once supplies were received in North Vietnam the 550th Transportation Group was responsible for the shipment of materiel to Laos and South Vietnam. Prior to further shipment materiel was temporarily placed in storage areas in the vicinity of three pivotal areas (Fig. A-34). In the Vinh area, supplies were placed in storage facilities along major routes. From these storage sites war materiel was shipped to northern Laos via Route 7 and the Song Ca River corridor through the Barthelemy Pass. The second area was located in the vicinity of Quang Khe. From this area materiel was transhipped to staging areas north of the Ban Karai Pass. The Karst Caves in this region also provided excellent storage facilities for war materiel. The geographic formation of these caves limited the effectiveness of allied air interdiction efforts. The third pivot point was located in the Dong Hoi "Choke-Area". Materiel was transported to the Ban Raving Pass via Routes 1036 and 1039 for further transshipment south. Supplies were transported to staging areas in the western Demilitarized Zone via Routes 120, 103, 1036, and 1032.

(S) In the Laotian Panhandle there were between fifteen and twenty Binh Trams operated by the

550th Transportation Group. These organizations had the capability of transporting vast quantities of war materiel south to Cambodia and east to South Vietnam. Available intelligence reports revealed that the majority of materiel shipped south was arms and ammunition. Food stuffs were either grown by the Binh Trams, purchased on the local economy, or confiscated from the populace. Petroleum products were provided by the pipeline which extended to the vicinity of Muong Nong in Base Area 611. The shadow supply system ringing the Bolovens Plateau provided some essential foodstuffs and pharmaceutical supplies.

(S) Intelligence reports indicated that the 470th Transportation Group operated Binh Trams in north-eastern Cambodia. Their missions included the movement of materiel south to Kratie via the Route 18 and the Mekong River network; movement of materiel into South Vietnam via Route 19 and 194; and possibly the stockpiling of strategic supplies on the western side of the Mekong River, along the Route 12 structures.⁴²

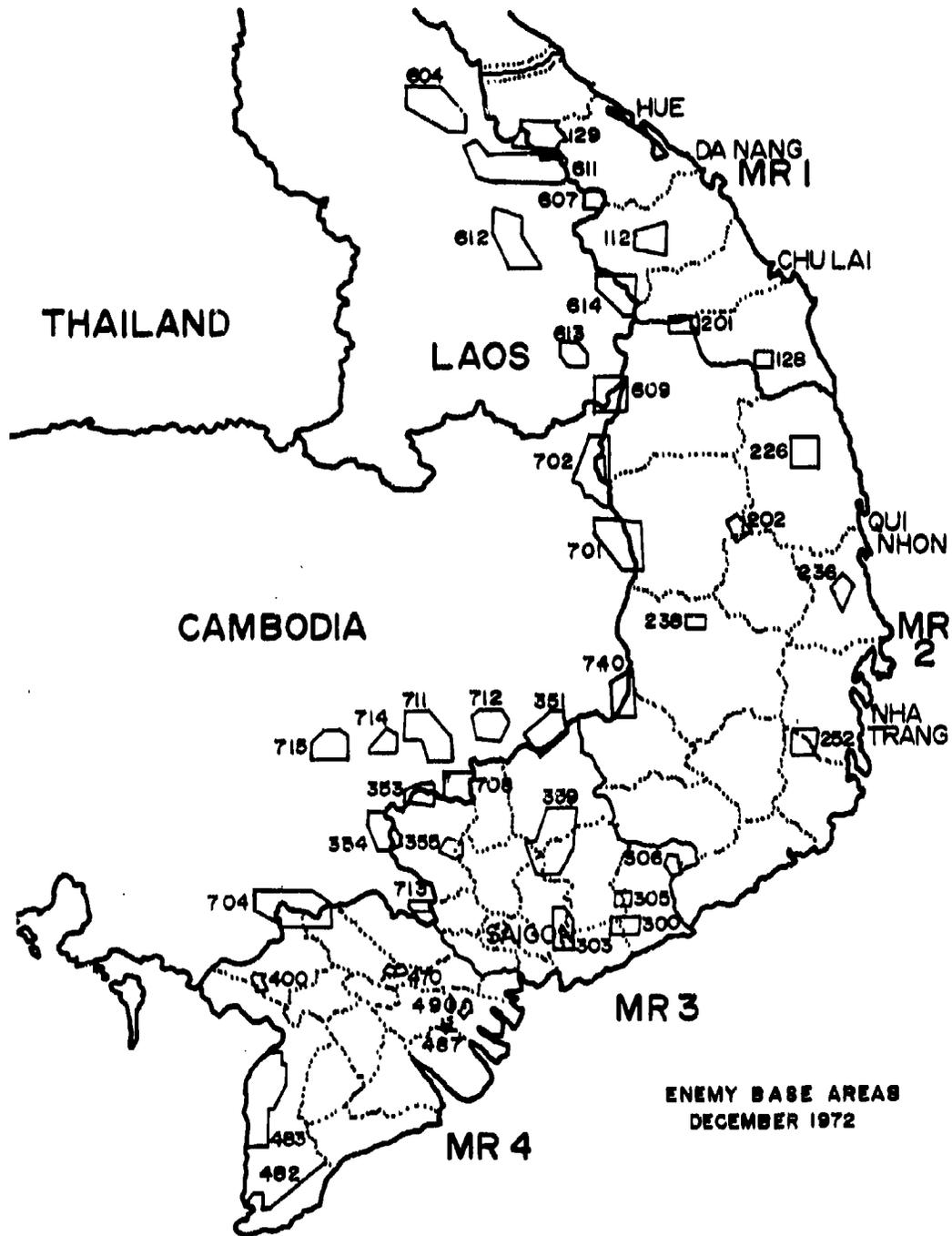
(S) In late 1972 COSVN rear service elements initiated activities in preparation for the coming dry season. An agent report revealed that the NVA/VC had recruited approximately 20,000 porters for the purpose of shuttling supplies into the South. Aerial observation in Cambodian Military Region 1 detected heavy foot and bicycle movement. If the porters mentioned in the above agent report were equipped with bicycles, approximately 2,000 tons of supplies could be handled daily.⁴³

(S) In 1972 North Vietnam's petroleum pipeline continued to deliver substantial quantities of petroleum products to NVA units. Photography revealed spurs from the main line leading to storage areas in the buffer zone along the North Vietnamese/Chinese border. Photography also revealed the construction of an additional pipeline, parallel to the original, extending from the Chinese border. It was believed that this second line became operational in October 1972. Allied attempts at air interdiction of the pipeline met with little success (Fig. A-35).⁴⁴

(S) During the 1972-1973 northeast monsoon it was estimated that the Laotian logistics effort would move large quantities of supplies into secure base areas along the South Vietnamese border in anticipation of future military and political operations in the Central and Coastal Highlands of VC Military Region 5. Just as direct resupply took place in Quang Tri Province to handle the increased flow of supplies in 1972, so it was expected similar activities would take place in the Highlands. In conjunction with the established southern Laos road network this route expansion would give the North Vietnamese an all-season resupply capability.

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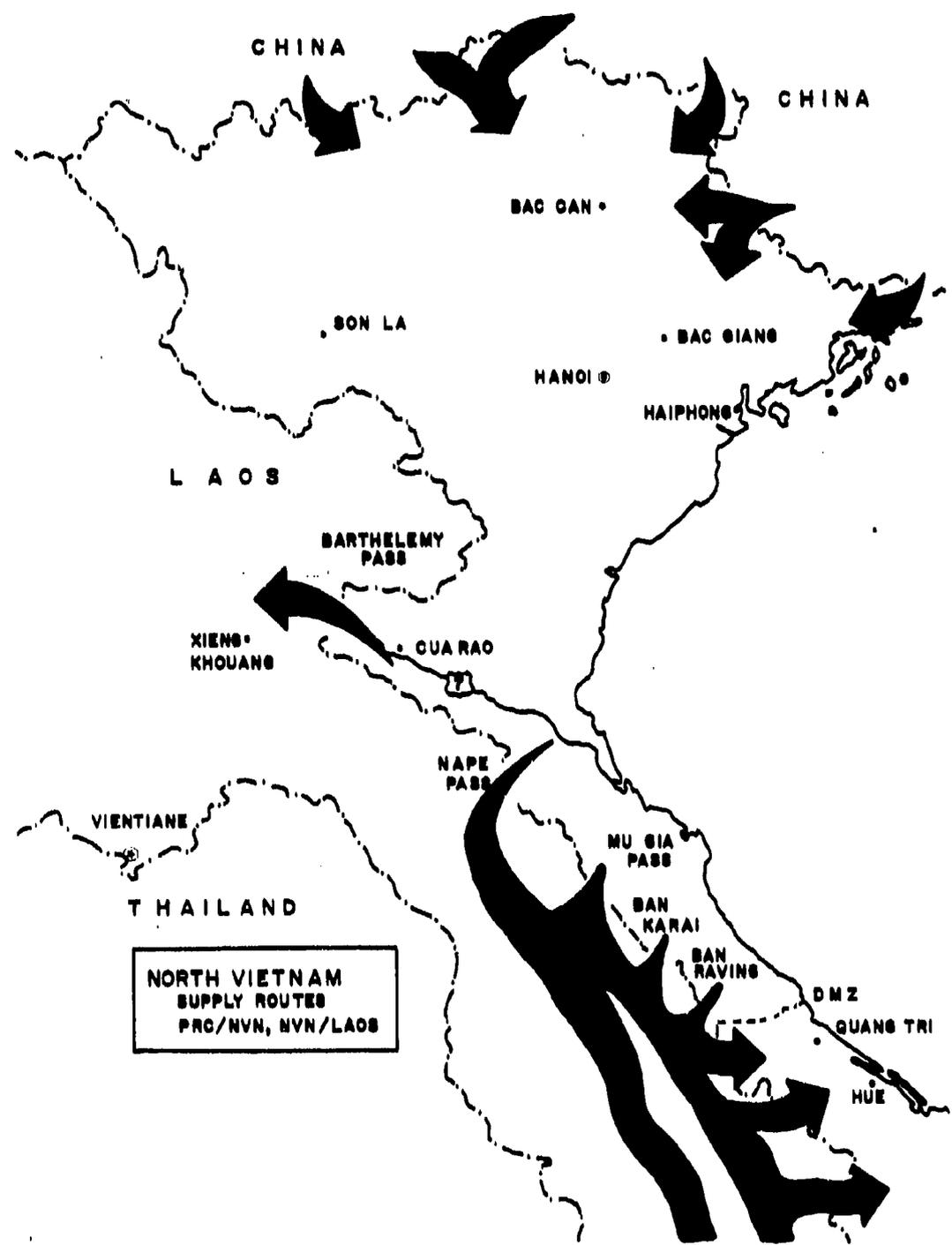
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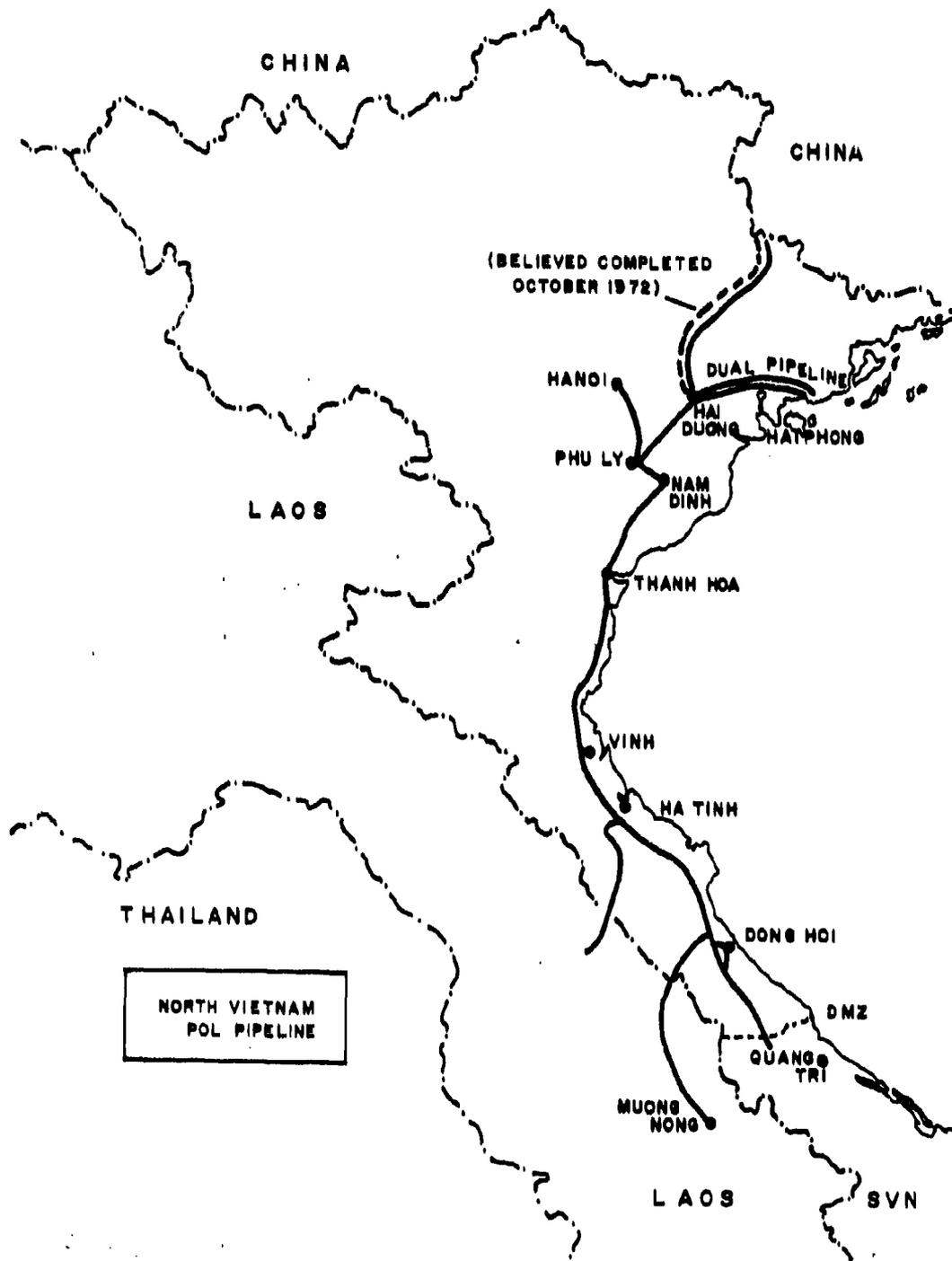
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Source: MACDI

Figure: A-35

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(S) It was believed that with the replacement of the Navy's P-3 aircraft by land based radar surveillance, the effectiveness of Operation MARKET TIME against seaborne infiltration would decline and enemy attempts at infiltration would increase. Since August 1969 and more particularly since the closing of the port of Sihanoukville in January 1970, a total of 20 attempted infiltrations were detected of which 16 aborted, two were destroyed, and two were successful. The inability of the enemy logistics system to provide adequate supplies to units in southern Cambodia and South Vietnam's Military Region 4 was an additional reason to expect increased attempts at seaborne infiltration in these areas.⁴⁰

IN-COUNTRY LOGISTICS

(S) From early May 1972 there were indications that the NVA was utilizing direct resupply methods for their units operating in South Vietnam. Photo intelligence and visual reconnaissance of the eastern Demilitarized Zone confirmed the establishment of a complementary land and water transportation network capable of handling an estimated 80 to 100 tons of supplies per day.

(S) Transshipment complexes in northern Military Region 1 of South Vietnam were fed by several major roads transiting the Demilitarized Zone. While the NVA continued to ship supplies through the Demilitarized Zone, the established drier routes through southern Laos were expected to support most materiel shipments during the northeast monsoon season. Resumed heavy use of the Loatlan Panhandle would allow the North to effectively disperse and distribute vital supplies and would simultaneously force a diffusion of allied air resources.

(S) Aerial photographic and visual reconnaissance revealed the establishment of a highlands logistics corridor, systematically developed by the enemy in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. A similar development was evident further south in the highlands of western Quang Nam, Quang Tin, Kontum, and Pleiku Provinces. Until early 1972 this area contained a basic river and trail logistics network incapable of supporting prolonged combat operations. The picture in late 1972, however, was one of a rapidly expanding east-west vehicular system.

(S) The 1972 NVA invasion of the South was supported by a nearly unprecedented high level of personnel infiltration, second only to 1968 when there were an estimated 235,000 personnel infiltrated. The MACV 1972 South Vietnam and Cambodia infiltration estimate stood at 143,000, with 58,400 destined for the B-5 Front/MRTTH area, 18,100 for Military Region 5, 30,800 for the B-3 Front, and 35,700 for COSVN.⁴¹

(S) The enemy effort in 1972 was comparable to that of 1968, but more limited in personnel resources. In 1968 enemy infiltration was greatest in the areas of the B-5 Front/MRTTH, VC Military Region 5, and COSVN, with less emphasis on the B-3 Front; in 1972 the DMZ/MRTTH, B-3 Front, and COSVN received the highest infiltration with VC Military Region 5 receiving the lowest. The pattern of infiltration supporting the enemy offensive indicated that the enemy hoped to achieve a sufficiently widespread presence in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos such that an in-place cease-fire would be advantageous to him.⁴²

NEW WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

(C) A majority of the new weapons and equipment employed by NVA/VC forces first appeared during the enemy's NGUYEN HUE Offensive and were of Soviet and Chinese manufacture. In April wire guided missiles identified by a PW as the AT-2 Swatter Antitank Guided Missile System were used against ARVN installations and an RF outpost in Quang Tri, Kontum, and Kien Tuong Provinces, although none of the missiles were used in their intended antitank role.⁴³

(C) During the offensive several new artillery pieces, mortars, and surface to air missiles were also employed by enemy forces. In April 130mm artillery was used for the first time during attacks on Quang Tri and Kontum. During the same period 122mm artillery was used in South Vietnam's Military Region 1 for the first time since 1971. In April a PW captured in Quang Nam Province revealed that the NVA 575th and 577th Artillery Battalions were issued new rockets, possibly the Soviet 250mm rocket with a range of 21 km. The use of 160mm mortars in Military Region 2 was confirmed for the first time on 6 May when a number of rounds were fired on the Dak Seang Ranger Camp. On 23 May two Soviet SA-7 missiles were captured intact by friendly elements operating south of Hue. Subsequently, SA-7s were employed to a limited extent in all military regions of South Vietnam. Also in May, aerial photographs of the An Loc area revealed that the enemy was using the Soviet ASU-57 self-propelled assault gun for the first time. On 25 June, the enemy employed 120mm mortars in Military Region 4 for the first time.

(C) Prior to the enemy offensive, in February, two new items of enemy artillery were detected. One was the Soviet 100mm field gun M1955, which is distinguished from the M1944 gun and the 85mm D-44 gun by single tires, split trails with a box section, multi-perforated "pepperpot" muzzle brake, and may be equipped with an infrared night sight-

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Two enemy 100mm anti-aircraft artillery guns, with their ATS prime movers, are passed by five enemy supply trucks heading south near Dong Hoi in North Vietnam on 19 April 1972. Vast quantities of weapons and supplies were moved through the southern panhandle of North Vietnam to the Demilitarized Zone area for reinforcement of North Vietnam's armies in Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam.

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ing system. The other was the Soviet 160mm mortar M-160, incorporating a longer tube and more effective base plate than the 160mm mortar M1943, allowing for greater range and accuracy.⁴⁰

(C) In April, when launching large scale attacks on Quang Tri the enemy employed T-54 and T-59 tanks for the first time. T-54s were also used against Tan Canh and An Loc. During the same month

PT-76 tanks were used in South Vietnam's Military Region 1 for the first time since enemy attacks against Special Forces camps west of Khe Sanh in 1968, in Military Region 2 for the first time since the 1968 attack against Ben Het, and in Military Region 3 for the first time.⁴⁰ In addition, the enemy greatly increased his use of CS gas during the offensive.⁴¹

1972 ENEMY ACTIVITIES

FIRST QUARTER ACTIVITIES

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 1 during January enemy activity was generally at a low level with the exception of the enemy B-5 Front, where activity increased sharply the last few days of the month. On 20 January in the northeastern Quang Tri Province area of Military Region Tri Thien Hue (MRTTH), elements of two NVA regiments conducted mixed rocket and mortar attacks and one ground assault on allied units and installations generally located east of Fire Support Base A-4. During February enemy activity remained at a generally low level except for a brief rise in mid-month. In the B-5 Front, enemy initiated activity was at a constantly low level and was characterized by indirect fire attacks against friendly forces operating in northeast Quang Tri Province. In MRTTH the level of enemy initiated activity increased sharply with the enemy placing indirect fires against four friendly fire support bases. Hue and Phu Bai installations also received several attacks by fire. In northern VC Military Region 5 enemy initiated activity increased during mid-February, returning to a low level at the end of the month. In March enemy activity was at a moderate level, except for the B-5 Front where enemy activity intensified to a high level at the end of the month. In the B-5 Front, enemy activity was characterized by major attacks-by-fire and ground attacks directed against friendly forces and installations in northeast and central Quang Tri Province. Enemy initiated attacks also increased in Quang Ngai Province where they were characterized by mortar and rocket fires against territorial forces and district headquarters.

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 2 enemy activity increased slightly during the first quarter but remained at a relatively low level. In southern enemy Military Region 5, enemy activity increased and was marked by a major terrorist incident in Qui Nhon City, increased fire and ground attacks in Phu Yen Province, and two fire attacks on friendly installations at Cam Ranh Bay followed by a sapper attack. During February enemy initiated activity increased slightly. In general it was characterized by interdiction activities along friendly lines

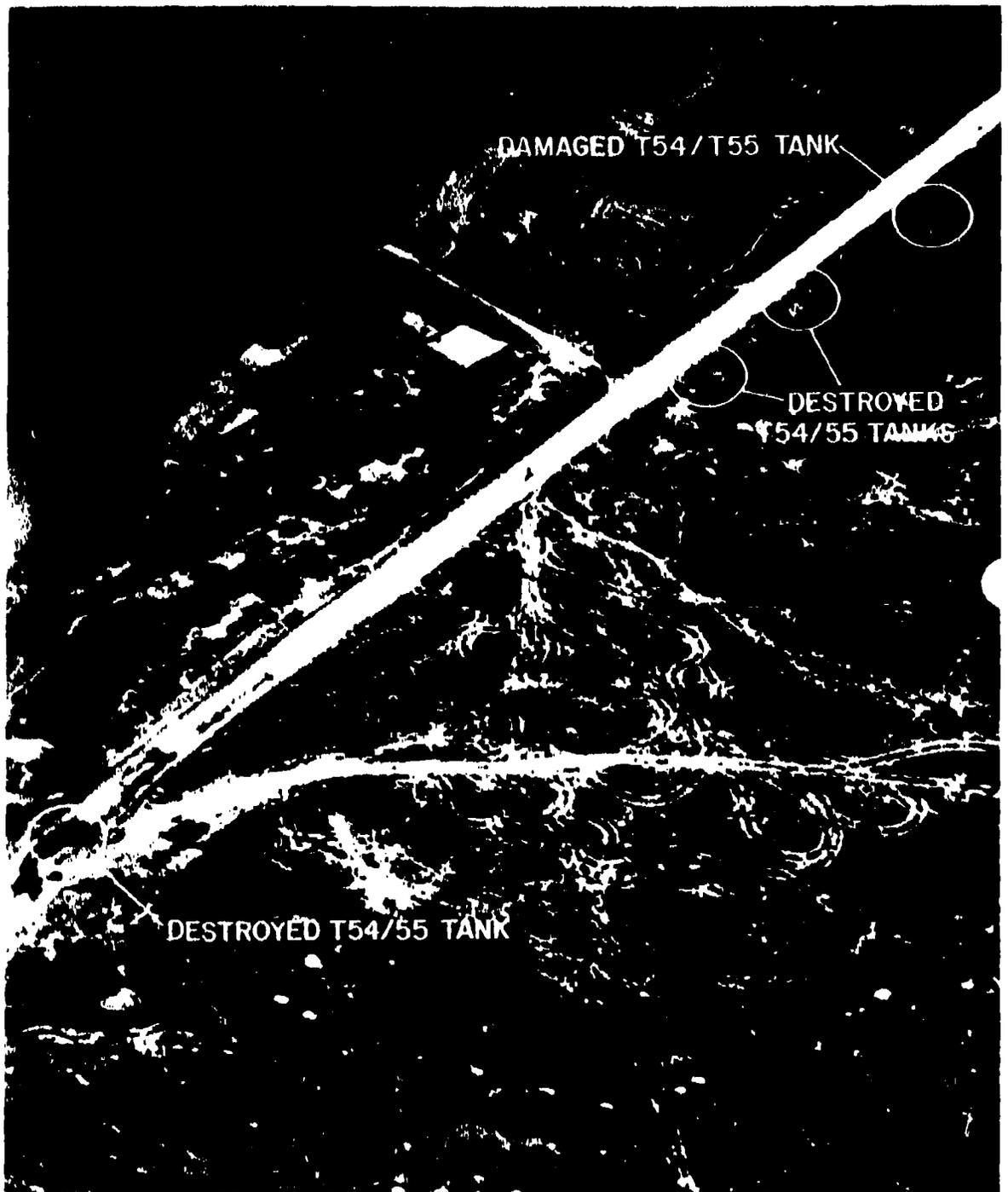
of communication and fires on allied installations. In March enemy initiated incidents again increased slightly. Prisoners captured in west central Kontum Province revealed that an offensive was imminent in the B-3 Front, that increased tactical activity would probably begin in April and last approximately one month, and that the targets would be Kontum City, ARVN outposts, and fire support bases east of Base Area 809 and along Highway 14.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 3: In spite of a slight increase in enemy activities in January the overall level remained low. Activities were characterized by enemy concern for future tactical operations in selected areas. After 18 January there was an increase in enemy ground probes against friendly bases throughout the region. During February, although enemy activity increased slightly after the middle of the month, the overall level remained low. Activity was characterized by enemy reaction to friendly operations and logistical efforts in preparation for increased tactical activity following the Tet holiday period. In January and February there were several reports that the enemy was preparing for increased tactical activity after Tet. In March the overall level of enemy initiated activities remained low. Activity was characterized by limited ground contacts, sporadic shellings, and sapper probes directed against territorial forces and lines of communication.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 4: Enemy initiated activity in the Delta remained at generally low levels in the first quarter. During January the number of indirect fire attacks increased slightly to an average of three per day, compared with two per day in December 1971. There were numerous indications from documents, agents, and ralliers that in February the enemy intended to increase significantly both the level and intensity of his military, political, and proselyting activities. In February there was a brief but sharp upsurge of enemy activity immediately after the enemy's Tet cease-fire period. It consisted mainly of light indirect fires and small ground attacks on outposts, troop field positions, and sub-sector headquarters. The most serious enemy incident occurred in Chuong Thien Province on 19 February when a regional

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VNAF A 1 "Skyraider" fighter bombers caught these four Soviet made T54/55 tanks along a road southwest of Dong Ha on April 12th, destroying three and damaging one. The tanks were part of the North Vietnamese force which invaded the Republic of Vietnam.

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force outpost was overrun, with 50 friendly casualties, an unusually high loss. March enemy initiated actions followed the February pattern.

SECOND AND THIRD QUARTER ACTIVITIES

(C) During April in South Vietnamese Military Region 1 enemy initiated activity increased to a high level in the B-5 Front and MRTTH and to a moderate level in northern VC Military Region 5. In the B-5 Front, the enemy pressed an offensive launched at the end of March with the objectives of forcing the evacuation of friendly fire support bases and of seizing Quang Tri City. By mid-April he had achieved his first objective and in the Quang Tri City area the situation was deteriorating rapidly as the enemy renewed his offensive. In MRTTH high level enemy activity forced the evacuation of two friendly fire support bases. Reports indicated that the enemy was preparing for future activities against Hue and friendly fire support bases. In northern VC Military Region 5 the enemy moved to gain control of Route 534, the major east-west artery along the Quang Nam-Quang Tin border. In May enemy initiated activity decreased to a moderate level in the B-5 Front and MRTTH, while remaining moderate in northern VC Military Region 5. In the B-5 Front the enemy continued his offensive, seizing Quang Tri City on 1 May. He then consolidated his gains and prepared for further attacks against friendly positions and the northern approaches to Hue. Enemy activities were characterized by attacks supported by armor and artillery. In MRTTH enemy activity decreased to a moderate level as friendly forces assumed the offensive. In Northern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity remained moderate as the enemy consolidated his gains following the friendly evacuation of Hiep Duc City. During the month of June on the B-5 Front enemy activity increased slightly, but by the end of the month after suffering heavy losses in men and materiel, the enemy was placed on the defensive as allied troops attacked north across the My Chanh River in Operations LAM SON 72. In northern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity was moderate, as the enemy generally restricted offensive operations to the period of low lunar illumination.

(C) At the start of the third quarter enemy activities increased in the B-5 Front, MRTTH, and along the Quang Nam-Quang Tin border. In the B-5 Front activity centered around the battle for Quang Tri City, then held by the enemy. There the enemy reinforced while to the northeast, southwest, and along the Cua Viet River he defended against the advance of ARVN and VNM units. In MRTTH enemy activity increased along Route 547, forcing friendly units to withdraw from Fire Support Base Bastogne on 26 July. In northern VC Military Region

5 enemy activity remained moderate until 23 July when the 711th NVA Division began offensive operations against allied forces in the vicinity of Fire Support Base Ross and Landing Zone Lion. August enemy activity continued to center around Quang Tri City. Enemy attacks on the South Vietnamese northern flank (Quang Tri City northeast to the coast) and western flanks (Quang Tri City south to the My Chanh River) were initiated to tie down ARVN forces in these areas, relieving pressure on enemy forces in the city. As these enemy tactics stalled the allied drive on the city, the NVA attempted to inflict heavy casualties on friendly forces by increased use of artillery fire. In MRTTH August enemy activities consisted mainly of attempts to counter ARVN thrusts into enemy base areas around Fire Support Base Bastogne. In northern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity was highlighted by rocket attacks on Da Nang and by the enemy capture of Fire Support Base Ross and Que Son district capital on 18 August during which the NVA employed 130mm artillery in Quang Nam for the first time. During September allied forces encountered stiff enemy resistance as they drove to retake Quang Tri Citadel and close off enemy supply corridors into the city. After the city was regained by friendly forces on 15 September the enemy shifted his activity to the northern Hai Lang Forest where he was unsuccessful in attempting to stage counterattacks south of the city. In MRTTH enemy tactical activity declined, indicating that the enemy was primarily engaged in resupply prior to the onset of the rainy season. In northern Military Region 5 tactical activity was widespread as the enemy launched coordinated attacks against four district headquarters, succeeding in capturing Tien Phuoc District Headquarters on 9 September.

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 2 April was marked by the beginning of the enemy NGUYEN HUE Offensive. In a series of attacks characterized by the coordinated use of infantry and armor the enemy B-3 Front effectively isolated Kontum City by land and closed the An Khe Pass, inhibiting resupply to Pleiku and Kontum Cities on Highway 19. By 24 April enemy armor and infantry overran Tan Canh and Dak To II, forcing the withdrawal of friendly elements from Rocket Ridge. By 1 May the only friendly position between enemy forces and Kontum City was Fire Support Base November. In Binh Dinh Province, VC Military Region 5, enemy elements methodically isolated and neutralized friendly forces. By the end of the month Hoi Nhon District Headquarters had fallen and Landing Zone English was evacuated by friendly forces. During May the B-3 Front forces consolidated their April tactical gains and began to concentrate on the logistical aspects of the offensive. On 14 May four

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enemy regiments supported by ten T-54 tanks attempted to seize Fire Support Base November. In this and another attack on Kontum City from 25 to 28 May the enemy failed, suffering heavy personnel and materiel losses including three-quarters of his tanks. At the end of the month the initiative in the Kontum area had passed over to friendly forces. In southern VC Military Region 5, enemy forces concentrated on logistical activities and the consolidation of April offensive successes in the three northern districts of Binh Dinh Province. In the final month of the second quarter enemy B-3 Front activity around Kontum City dropped to a low level after enemy units were driven out of the urban area on 7 June. The enemy lost the equivalent of two regiments in fighting around the city and was experiencing difficulties in obtaining replacements, food, and ammunition. B-3 Front forces were also kept off balance by pressure from ARVN offensive operations. Intensive friendly ground and air operations in the Kontum Pass area were successful and on 30 June a thirty truck convoy arrived at Kontum from Pleiku, the first convoy to reach the provincial capital since 22 April.

(C) As the third quarter began it was evident that the enemy had suffered serious losses in the fighting during the period April through June. In the B-3 Front enemy initiated activity remained at a low level, suggesting that major enemy units had withdrawn from the Kontum battlefield. In the Kontum Pass area enemy activity was light during the first half of the month as enemy units withdrew to the west to resupply and regroup. Even after some enemy units returned in late July their activities were characterized by only scattered light shelling and harassment against traffic on Route 14. In southern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity decreased during the first half of the month, as it appeared that major enemy elements were withdrawing northward to established base areas. Known heavy enemy casualties and reports of impressment indicated that the enemy was suffering serious manpower shortages. Only token enemy resistance was met as friendly units secured the Bong Son Pass. After 30 July enemy activity in northern Binh Dinh Province dropped off sharply and it appeared that the enemy had only limited capabilities to initiate offensive action. In August in the B-3 Front, Kontum Province, enemy activity remained at a low level and consisted mainly of increased resistance northwest of Kontum City as friendly forces probed to the north early in the month. In Pleiku Province an increase in enemy activity indicated the shift of B-3 Front emphasis to the south following the spring offensive. In mid-August new tactics were initiated in a move to economize enemy forces while minimizing the effect of B-52 missions. These tactics consisted of scattered indirect fires, harass-

ment, and terrorist activities in cities and along lines of communication. In southern VC Military Region 5 enemy initiated activity dropped sharply following a high point in mid-July, indicating inability of enemy units to sustain significant activity without reinforcements. During the final month of the third quarter enemy activity in the B-3 Front, including Kontum City, remained at a low level, consisting mainly of light mortar and rocket attacks, and ground probes in an area approximately 15 km northwest of Kontum City. In southern VC Military Region 5, Binh Dinh Province, enemy activity consisted of brief highpoints as it appeared that the focus of enemy activity was moving southward.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 3: During April enemy activity increased significantly in Military Region 3 and remained at a high level in all parts of the region except VC Military Region 6 and the Saigon area. A series of enemy shelling and extensive tank supported ground attacks in Binh Long Province (VC Military Region 10) resulted in the loss of the district capital of Loc Ninh and the Quan Loi Airfield on 7 April. From the fall of Loc Ninh until July, the enemy continued an offensive against An Loc. In April indirect fire attacks often exceeding 1000 rounds of artillery per day were used to pin down and harass ARVN forces in the area. On 15 April a series of unsuccessful enemy ground attacks supported by Soviet T-54 tanks was conducted against An Loc. From 26 to 29 April, An Loc reportedly received over 4,000 rounds of mixed mortar, rocket, and artillery fire. In the remainder of South Vietnam's Military Region 3 enemy activity was characterized by scattered indirect fires and ground attacks on ARVN, regional and popular forces (RF/PF) outposts, government administrative stations, and sector headquarters. During May enemy activity remained at a high level in VC Military Region 10, Long An, and Ba Ria Sub-Regions and at a low level in Tay Ninh Province. There was no significant enemy activity reported in VC Military Region 6 and the Saigon area. At An Loc elements of two enemy divisions supported by an estimated artillery regiment and remnants of an armored regiment continued to attack. From 10 to 15 May An Loc received a daily average of 5500 rounds in conjunction with heavy ground attacks supported by armor. The 7th NVA Division blocked Route 13 to the south, preventing the relief of An Loc by ARVN forces. On 4 May the Soviet wire guided missile, AT-3 Sagger, was employed for the first time in this region. SA-7 missiles were also used around An Loc and along Route 13. In the Long An and Ba Ria Sub-Regions there were significant enemy initiated activities to include rocket and mortar

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attacks, ground contacts, and interdiction of roads and waterways. During the month of June enemy activity continued at a moderate level in VC Military Region 10, while in Tay Ninh Province, Sub-Region 1, Long An, Ba Ria, and Thu Bien Sub-Regions, a low level of activity was reported. No enemy activity was reported in VC Military Region 6, and only one terrorist incident occurred in Saigon. In Binh Long Province the enemy continued to maintain pressure on An Loc with shelling averaging 265 rounds of mixed mortar, rocket, and artillery fire daily. From 22 May the intensity of enemy fires on An Loc decreased. There were numerous contacts in the An Loc area, however, as ARVN forces continued to clear the area. To the south elements of the 7th NVA Division still prevented the opening of Route 13.

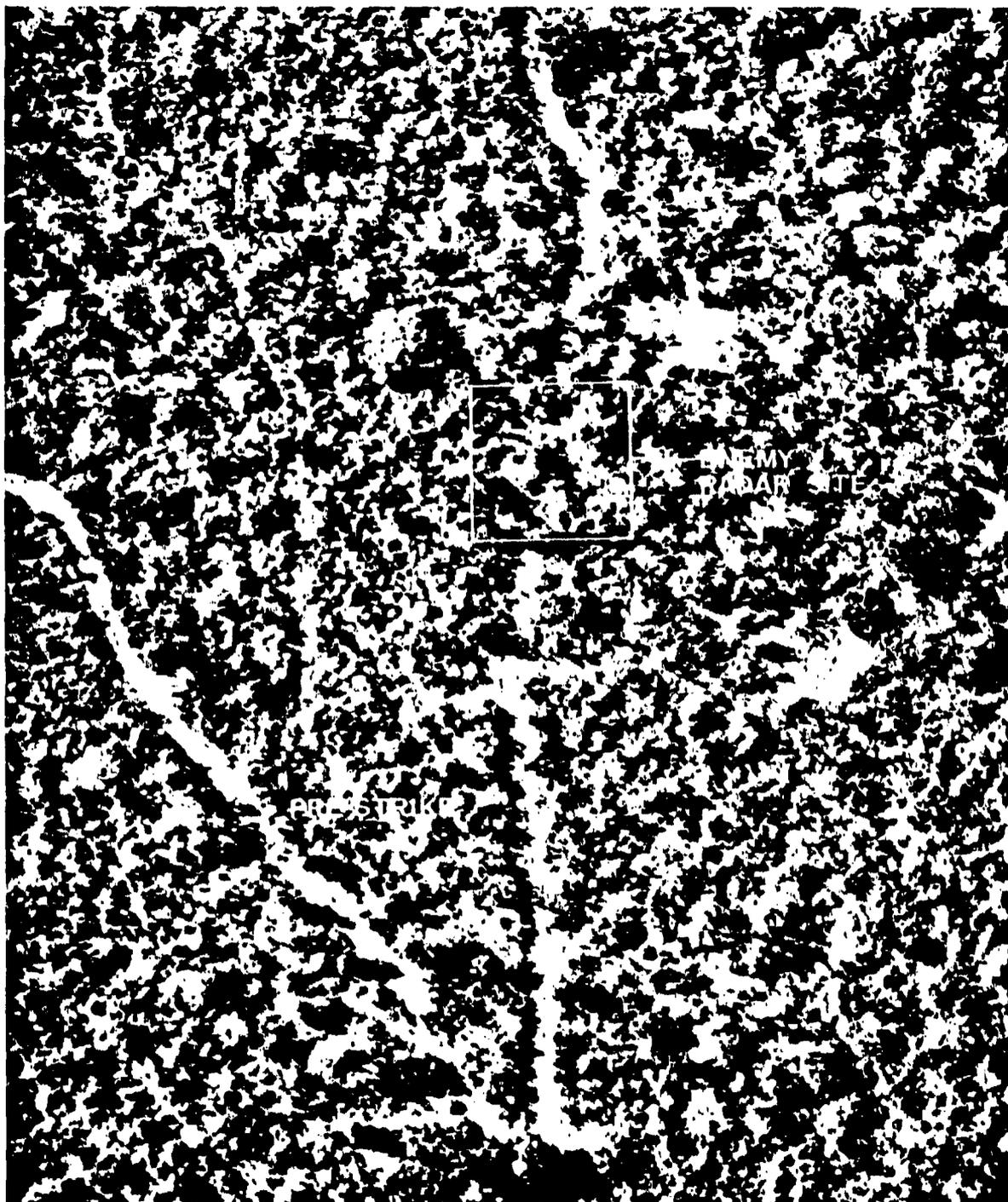
(C) At the beginning of the third quarter enemy activity in VC Military Region 10 continued at a moderate level; elsewhere a low level of activity was reported. In Binh Long Province the enemy continued operations against friendly forces around An Loc and Route 13 and in the Minh Than area to the southwest of An Loc. An Loc received over 700 mortar, rocket, and artillery rounds during the month. In western Phuoc Long Province from 30 June to 4 July there was a series of coordinated ground attacks. The most significant activity occurred on 1 July when the ARVN signal station on Nui Ba Ra Mountain and Landing Zone Buttons received indirect fire and sapper attacks. In August enemy activity in VC Military Region 4 continued at the level of the previous month. In the An Loc area enemy elements attempted to contain ARVN forces and interdict Route 13 immediately south of the city. Other enemy units, elements of the 7th NVA Division and two sapper battalions, after unsuccessful attacks around An Loc, moved southward to Lal Khe on 11 August. Other enemy units concentrated on interdicting Route 13 between Lal Khe and Chon Thanh. During September enemy activity continued at a low to moderate level in VC Military Region 10; elsewhere in Military Region 3 it was at a low level. In VC Military Region 10, enemy activities were centered around Quan Loi, where throughout the month he defended against ARVN offensive operations. Elements of the 7th NVA Division continued to interdict Route 13.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 4: During the first half of April the most significant enemy activity took place in the triborder area of Kien Tuong, Dinh Tuong, and Kien Phong Provinces (VC Military Region 2). There the 88th NVA Regiment was involved in an effort to wrest from friendly control the area generally north of Base Area 470. By month's end he had succeeded in this effort. Enemy operations during the month in both

the triborder area and western Chuong Thien Province were apparently preparatory in nature, with the objectives of consolidating base areas and securing lines of communication prior to large unit actions. Along the Kien Tuong/Kien Phong Province border in particular, activity indicated the possibility of additional enemy troop infiltration. May enemy activity in the Delta was at a lower level than in April, but continued to be elevated in comparison with prior months. Activity was greatest in three areas: the triborder area, northwestern Kien Giang Province, and western Chuong Thien Province. In the first area it appeared that two enemy regiments were coordinating their efforts to attack district towns, Route 4, and other lines of communication. Prisoners and captured documents indicated increased enemy infiltration into the area. In northwest Kien Giang Province a prisoner and captured documents gave the first solid evidence that elements of the 1st NVA Division were attempting to infiltrate the Republic. In western Chuong Thien Province the number of enemy incidents was high, but most were minor, and friendly casualties were light. At the beginning of June enemy activity began at a low level, rose sharply during the second and third weeks, and tapered off again. Highlights of June enemy activity included two unsuccessful attacks on Tuyen Binh district town (Kien Tuong Province) which were probably designed to cover infiltration into Base Area 470. Elsewhere in the Delta there was only scattered enemy activity, including two attempts to overrun district towns. Reports indicated enemy intentions to seize as much terrain as possible, to gain control of a large segment of the population, and to counter Vietnamization and pacification during the phase of the offensive beginning in July.

(C) During the first month of the third quarter enemy activity in Military Region 4 began at a moderate level, but declined from a high of 24 incidents per day for the first week to an average of 14 the last week. The heaviest concentration of activity occurred in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces. In early July enemy forces initiated action to seize the triborder area in the vicinity of Base Area 470. TACAIR and B-52 strikes there and around San Giang district town forced enemy withdrawal to the west on 12 July. Throughout the rest of the Delta enemy activities were characterized by rocket and mortar attacks and light ground attacks. In August enemy incidents were at a low level except for a moderate increase in the middle of the month. Most activity was concentrated in Dinh Tuong Province, except for the evening of 14 August when there was a series of shelling in Kien Hoa Province. Indications were that the enemy was continuing to infiltrate elements

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USAF reconnaissance aircraft pinpointed this well-camouflaged Communist radar site near Tchepone, Laos.

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of a division as well as other units into Dinh Tuong Province. Apparent enemy targets were Route 4, district towns in western Dinh Tuong Province, My Tho City, and the Cho Cao Canal. Enemy activity during the month consisted of sporadic ground contacts, shellings, and probes apparently intended to divert friendly forces while the enemy continued the infiltration of personnel and supplies. At the close of the third quarter enemy activity was at a moderate level, concerned primarily toward keeping open major resupply and infiltration routes. Activities were characterized by scattered rocket and mortar attacks, ground contacts, and small sapper attacks. One enemy objective in September appeared to be the establishment of a base area in the Seven Mountains area of Chau Doc Province to be used as a springboard for future activity. In VC Military Region 2 the enemy attacked government outposts which were restricting the southward movement of men and supplies into Base Area 470. In VC Military Region 3 similar activity occurred as the enemy attempted to lessen government control over supply routes and to prepare forward areas east of the U-Minh Forest leading into Chuong Thien Province.²²

FOURTH QUARTER ACTIVITIES

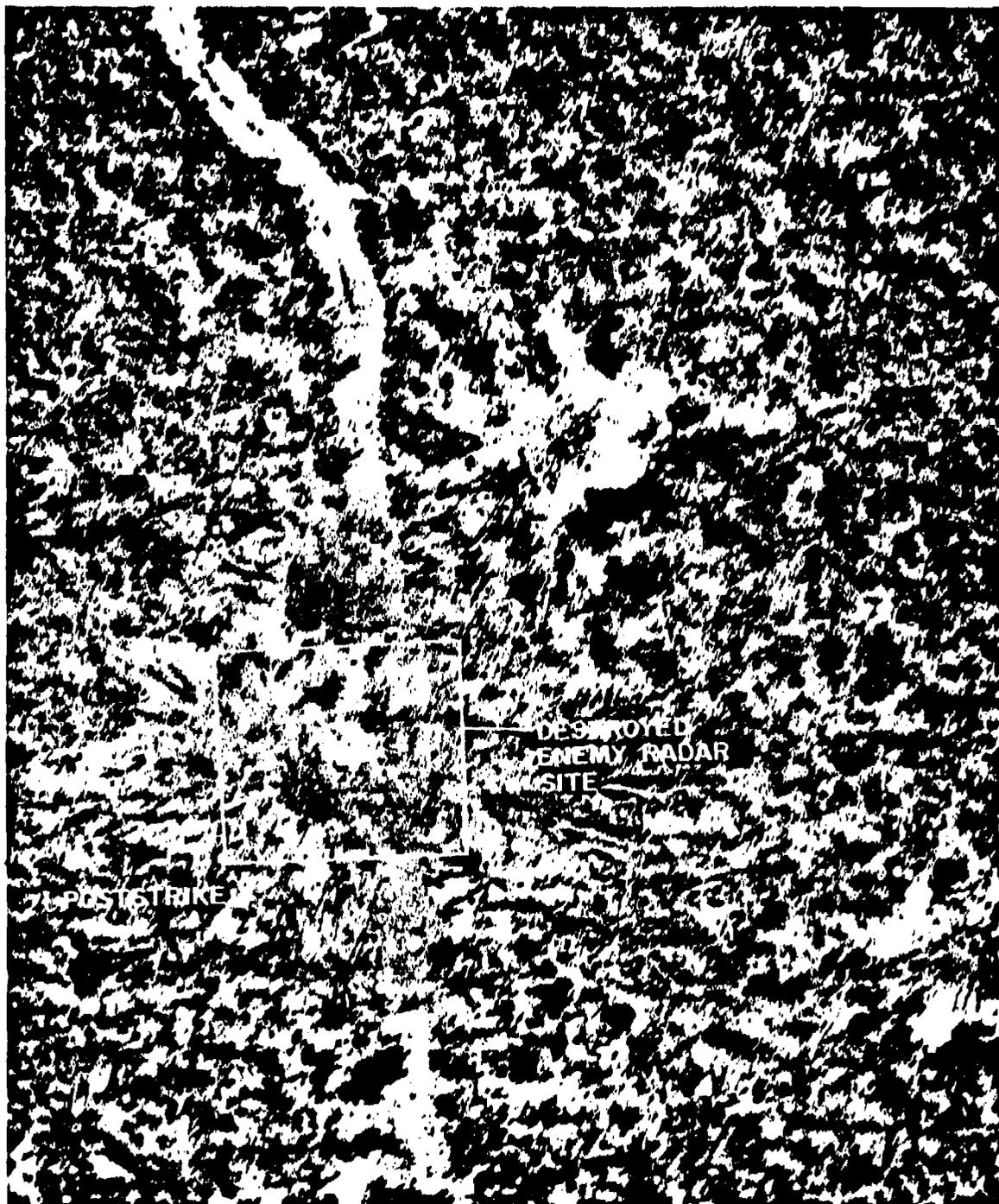
(C) As the fourth quarter began, previously noted levels of enemy activity in South Vietnamese Military Region 1 continued. In the B-5 Front the enemy was largely on the defensive during the month of October. He attempted to repulse allied thrusts north along Route 560 and south into the Hai Lang Forest. Late in the month the enemy only offered light resistance to Vietnamese Marine Corps units north of Quang Tri City, while in the Hai Lang Forest NVA units continued to resist Vietnamese Airborne Division operations. In MRTTH except for a brief upsurge at mid-month, enemy initiated activity was at a low level as the enemy resupplied, attempted to infiltrate the coastal lowlands, and spread his control over the rural populace. In northern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity increased during the month, but the enemy proved unable to prevent friendly forces from recapturing Tien Phuoc district headquarters on 7 October. From mid-month enemy activities appeared designed to weaken the government's control over the rural populace. Activities with this objective, such as terrorism and abduction, were prevalent throughout South Vietnam in late October as the enemy believed a cease-fire would be signed in Paris on 31 October and attempted to expand his control in rural areas before it took effect and International Control Commission teams arrived on the scene. Although no cease-fire occurred, enemy activities during November were clearly oriented toward preparations for the cessation of hostilities. In the B-5 Front

enemy resistance was determined throughout the month as he countered Vietnamese Marine Corps and Airborne Division operations aimed at regaining territory lost during the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. Enemy activity in MRTTH increased initially, but fell off after the first week of November as enemy units avoided contact while conserving forces in preparation for the anticipated cease-fire. Similarly, in northern VC Military Region 5 enemy activity tapered off during the month. The enemy in this region spent much of the month in resupply activities, limiting operations to assaults by fire, harassment and terror around major population centers, and along lines of communication to keep friendly forces dispersed and away from his logistics corridors. While these activities were being carried out by main force units, local force units attempted to spread their influence in the countryside. As the year drew to a close enemy activity in Military Region 1 continued at a low level except in Quang Tri Province (B-5 Front) where the enemy maintained an active defense. There the enemy utilized his limited armor resources, heavy shellings, and counterattacks along the coast to blunt friendly advances in the direction of the Demilitarized Zone. At the end of December enemy forces in northern Quang Tri Province were reinforced by elements of two regiments as the enemy demonstrated his determination to defend territory he had seized in the spring. Throughout December enemy units in MRTTH avoided contact with friendly elements, procuring food and other supplies while awaiting political developments. At the end of the month major elements of the 324B NVA Division were believed positioned west and northwest of Hue, apparently in preparation for offensive operations in the area. In VC Military Region 5 enemy initiated activity was also generally at a low level, consisting of sporadic assaults-by-fire and terrorist acts such as a 3 December rocket attack of Da Nang. Enemy units defended contested areas in response to friendly initiatives, emphasizing the defense of supply routes into the coastal lowlands. The heaviest activity in the month focused on Fire Support Base Baldy, in Quang Nam Province, where friendly units accounted for 114 enemy killed the final week of December.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 2: At the beginning of the fourth quarter the focus of enemy activity in the B-3 Front returned to Kontum Province where the enemy forced abandonment of the Ben Het Border Ranger Camp on 12 October. At the same time, elements of the 28th NVA Regiment conducted a series of attacks on ARVN units north of Kontum City. Throughout the month enemy B-3 Front units appeared engaged in a coordinated campaign to tie down ARVN units to provincial capitals and interdict major routes while expanding control

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The radar site identified in the previous photograph after a USAF strike.

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over rural areas prior to the anticipated cease-fire on 31 October. In Kontum Province late in the month there were attacks-by-fire on Kontum City; Route 14 between Kontum and Pleiku Cities was kept closed by elements of the 95B NVA Regiment, and heavy enemy pressure forced the abandonment of the border ranger camps at Dak Seang and Duc Co. In contrast to the B-3 Front, enemy activity in southern VC Military Region 5 remained at a low level. The major enemy unit in the region, the 8d NVA Division, avoided contact while regrouping and resupplying. Late in the month PW interrogation, agent reports, and captured documents gave indications that the enemy was planning increased activity to expand control over the populace and interdict Routes 1 and 19. As October passed without the anticipated cease-fire, enemy-initiated activity in the B-3 Front diminished after having peaked late in the month. Throughout the month of November enemy activity was characterized by attacks-by-fire and small ground attacks, particularly in northern Kontum Province. In the Kontum Pass area the 95B NVA Regiment harassed traffic along Route 14 but was unable to close the route. In mid-November in Pleiku Province the enemy suffered over 400 killed in ground attacks against friendly troops in the vicinity of Thanh An. Thereafter his activity declined sharply. In Binh Dinh Province enemy activity remained at a low level and was characterized by small unit actions and assaults-by-fire. As December began enemy activity in the B-3 Front decreased and remained at a low level until the end of the month when there was a sharp increase northwest of Kontum City. There elements of three enemy regiments launched a series of indirect fire and ground attacks from 23 to 27 December. The most probable reasons for these actions were to protect previously captured areas which were threatened by friendly operations and to cause ARVN to reinforce with units from Thanh An and Duc Co, relieving pressure on the enemy units there which had suffered heavy casualties in November. In Binh Dinh Province the 8d NVA Division continued to avoid major contacts with friendly units. Most contacts, moreover, were friendly initiated.

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 3 October witnessed steadily increasing enemy initiated activity which only subsided to a moderate level at the end of the month. Enemy activity was focused in the provinces north and west of Saigon and was characterized by assaults-by-fire, ground contacts, and interdiction of routes. As the supposed date of the cease-fire, 31 October, approached, enemy activity increased sharply, with the enemy attempting to force ARVN units to withdraw from outlying provinces in order to defend Saigon, leav-

ing the heavily populated countryside unprotected. At the end of the month enemy rocket and mortar attacks became widespread as the enemy attempted to demonstrate to the rural populace that the Government of Vietnam was unable to defend them. Ultimately, anticipated large scale enemy attacks failed to materialize either because the enemy lacked the manpower and materiel resources or through poor coordination. After reaching a peak in late October in anticipation of a cease-fire, enemy initiated activities dropped to a low level at the beginning of November, where they remained throughout the month. After having suffered heavy losses the enemy reverted to a defensive posture in order to regroup and refit in preparation for the resumption of active operations based on developments in Paris. His activities for the most part were defensive in nature, designed to secure his logistics network from Cambodia into western Binh Duong Province via the Saigon River and through War Zone C into Tay Ninh Province. December was marked by a very low level of enemy activity. The enemy was apparently conserving his manpower and engaging in resupply activities while awaiting further instructions. Low cost, small risk operations such as rocket attacks on Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut Air Bases and a sapper attack on an ammunition dump on the outskirts of Saigon not only permitted the enemy to exaggerate his presence, but also screened his logistical activities elsewhere in the region.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 4: October enemy activity was at a low to moderate level. It was characterized by attempts to interdict major land and water routes with particular emphasis on Route 4, the main road leading from the Delta to Saigon. The enemy hoped to force ARVN units to concentrate along the lines of communication, leaving the countryside undefended. There were also numerous attacks-by-fire and small ground attacks against lower level Government of Vietnam administrative centers to discredit the government and the pacification program. Concurrently, enemy main force units were moving into the Delta from Cambodia in order to strengthen the enemy position prior to a cease-fire. Throughout November enemy initiated activity continued at a low level. All available information indicated that the enemy was continuing his attempts to infiltrate men and supplies into the Delta from Cambodia. The limited enemy activities were aimed at securing routes from Cambodia to permit the safe transit of critically needed food, medicine, and ammunition. Once in the Delta enemy forces were breaking down into small units which dispersed throughout the region in order to claim as much control as possible over the land and population prior to any cease-fire.

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An NVA surface-to-air missile site north of the DMZ destroyed by USAF F-4 fighter bombers. Two empty missile positions and the central guidance area (CGA) are visible.

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The only enemy activity that increased in November was terrorism, which was characterized by the selective assassination of government officials and the bombing of public places. These acts were probably implemented to demonstrate the government's inability to provide adequate protection, to eliminate or intimidate potential opposition, and to maintain visibility without risk of heavy losses. In the first week of December enemy initiated activity increased noticeably. In VC Military Region 2 the movement of supplies south was noted, probably into Dinh Tuong Province, where reports indicated serious shortages of mortar and rocket ammunition. In VC Military Region 3 enemy activity was concentrated in Chuong Thien Province, typified by attacks-by-fire and small ground attacks meant to disrupt the pacification and Vietnamization programs while extending enemy influence prior to and during a cease-fire. Following this brief upsurge, enemy activity declined to a low level during the remainder of the month. Intelligence indicated that the enemy probably lacked the manpower and supplies necessary to sustain large scale operations and would instead employ terrorism as the principal means to discredit Government of Vietnam programs.

1973 ENEMY ACTIVITY

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 1 there was little change to mark the beginning of 1973. There were a few enemy initiated actions, the enemy apparently content to remain on the defensive. This situation persisted until the cease-fire and was probably the result of an enemy decision to conserve men and materiel for offensive operations at the time of the cease-fire. In Quang Tri Province the enemy defended the north bank of the Thach Han River against attacks by the Airborne Division while in the Hai Lang Forest he withdrew, abandoning large amounts of equipment to friendly forces. Further to the south along the Quang Nam-Quang Tin Province border, the 711th NVA Division offered stiff resistance to ARVN advances toward Hiep Duc, protecting an advanced logistics base which had been set up to support enemy plans to extend control into the coastal lowlands. In Quang Ngai Province the 2d NVA Division spent the month out of contact in preparation for major operations against populated coastal areas and Fire Support Base San Juan Hill. In MRTTH enemy units also avoided contact with friendly forces, remaining on the defensive while preparing to renew the offensive. Late in the month, as it became evident that a cease-fire was imminent, there were indications that the enemy was making final preparations for a last minute push into the coastal lowlands. Additionally, it was reported that after the cease-fire local force units and political cadre would prob-

ably attempt to increase their influence in rural areas through coercion of the populace and selected assassination of Government of Vietnam officials. In the meantime, main force units would probably hold their cease-fire positions, consolidating their position in the areas they controlled.

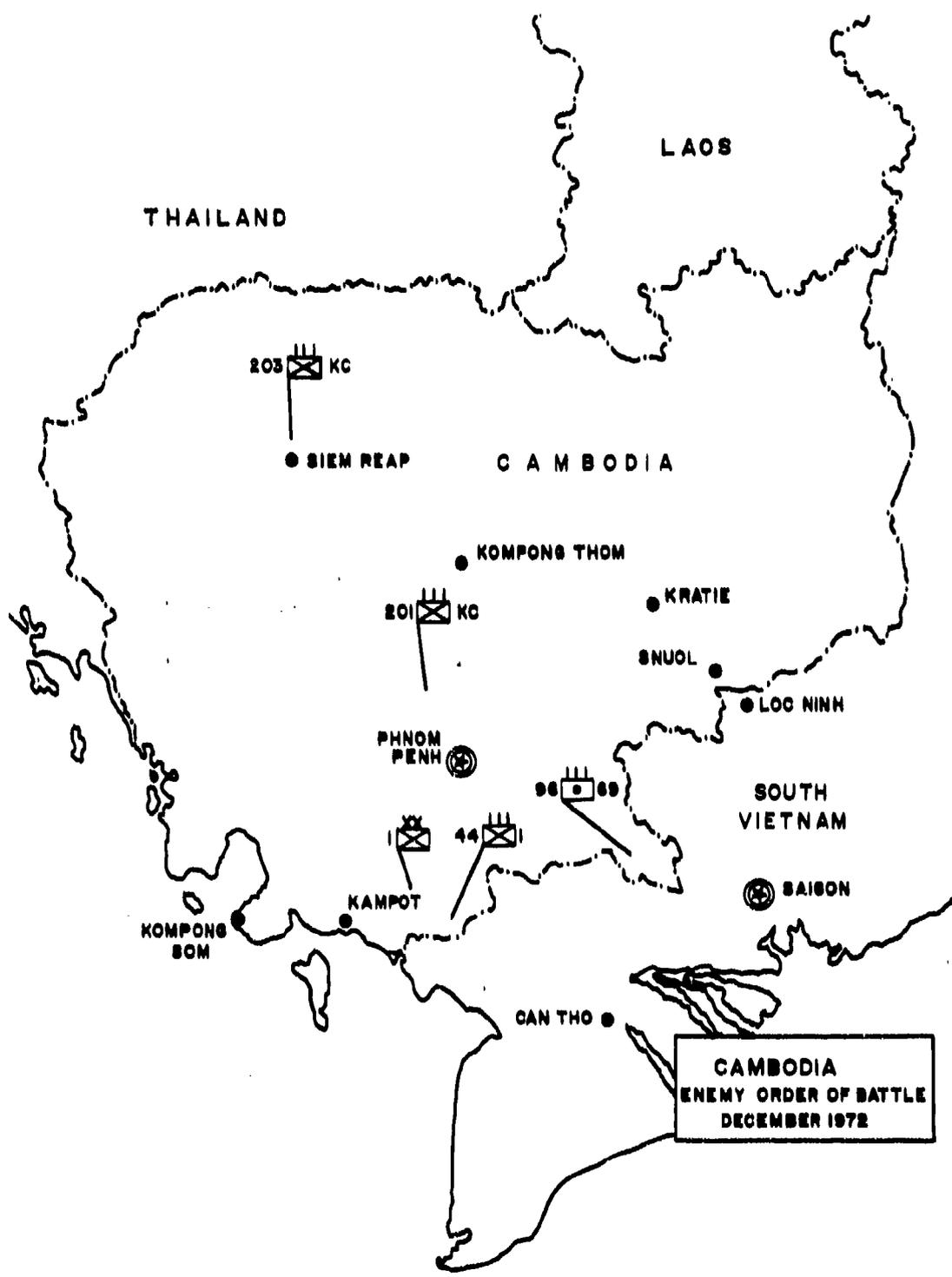
(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 2 enemy activity shifted to the Kontum Pass area where Route 14 between Pleiku and Kontum Cities was briefly closed on 31 December. Thereafter, enemy initiated activity was at a low level. In Pleiku Province the 320th NVA Division, after resupply and regrouping beginning in early December, renewed attacks in the Duc Co area shortly prior to the cease-fire. One reason for the light enemy activity was the effect of B-52 strikes north of Kontum City which inflicted heavy personnel and materiel losses on the enemy. Anticipated offensive operations prior to the cease-fire did not take place.

(C) South Vietnamese Military Region 3: At the beginning of the new year enemy initiated activity remained at a low level, the only significant event being the 4 January shelling of Bien Hoa Air Base. It remained at this level until shortly before the cease-fire as enemy units avoided contact while refitting and resupplying. An upsurge in enemy activity characterized by an increase in the intensity of assaults-by-fire did not occur until 25 January. It was estimated that the enemy's intention was to give ARVN as little time as possible to react to enemy initiatives prior to the effective date of the cease-fire. During the post cease-fire period the enemy was expected to increase his efforts to expand political control over populated areas by propaganda using flags, slogans, and demonstrations, as well as elimination or intimidation of government officials down to hamlet level. It was also expected that the enemy would proselytize ARVN and territorial forces and attempt to recruit new members for the National Liberation Front.

(C) In South Vietnamese Military Region 4 enemy initiated action remained at a low level until 3 January when there was a dramatic region wide increase in light attacks-by-fire which lasted three days. In keeping up the level of terrorism which had grown widespread in December, the enemy fired on towns during daylight hours, apparently intending to produce civilian casualties. In mid-month there was also a noticeable increase in assassinations of hamlet chiefs and other civil servants. Simultaneously lines of communication were disrupted as the enemy mined several bridges on major routes in the southern part of the Delta. All these activities were designed to intimidate the populace with low risk and resource expenditure on the part of the enemy. During the second half of January enemy activity remained at a very low level until the eve of the cease-fire when it increased signifi-

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Source: MACDI

Figure: A-36

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cantly as the enemy began implementing his pre-cesses-fire tactical plans. On 23 and 24 January he launched a series of attacks-by-fire and ground attacks along the Cambodian border with Chau Doc and Kien Phong Provinces as elements of an enemy regiment infiltrated in VC Military Region 2. On 25 and 26 January elements of two NVA regiments infiltrated in approximately the same areas, indicating that the enemy was repeating earlier attempts to seize control of populated areas of the Delta along the Cambodian border. Information on enemy post-cesses-fire plans was fragmentary. There were indications, however, that due to supply and manpower problems he would concentrate on logistics efforts and on the recruitment of youths to fill the ranks of local force units. Other than this the enemy would stress terror and assassination to make his presence felt and weaken the authority of the Government of Vietnam.²⁸

(S/NF) On the eve of the cease-fire it was estimated that countrywide the enemy would concentrate on gaining control of real estate and the rural population rather than attempting to eliminate ARVN units. His operations would probably take place during a short period and would be designed to maximize Communist gains during the confusion of the early cease-fire period.²⁹

(S/NF) Throughout the Republic of Vietnam enemy activity, as expected, sharply increased 24 to 48 hours before the signing of the cease-fire. The heaviest fighting occurred in Quang Tri Province where enemy forces countered Vietnamese Marine efforts to secure a foothold along the south bank of the Cua Viet River. By 30 January the marines had been forced back by enemy counterattacks, both sides apparently having suffered heavy losses. In the remainder of South Vietnam's Military Region 1, it was estimated that enemy operations were primarily designed to hold government forces in defensive positions around provincial and district capitals while enemy local force units infiltrated the easily accessible villages and hamlets.

(C) In South Vietnam's Military Region 2, increased enemy initiated activity began on 26 January and was characterized by shellings, route interdictions, and the infiltration of local force units into rural hamlets. Route 1 along the coast, Route 14, Route 20 between Bao Loc and Dalat, and other major highways were reported interdicted at various points. By 1 February Route 1 had been reopened, but Route 14 was still interdicted by elements of the 95B NVA Regiment near Chu Pao.

(C) In South Vietnam's Military Region 3 the major enemy effort began on 27 January in the vicinity of Tay Ninh City where enemy forces briefly seized control over several outlying hamlets.

(C) From 27 to 31 January the level of enemy activity rose sharply in Military Region 4 of South Vietnam. Enemy incidents, characterized by harassing fire, light attacks-by-fire, and attempted hamlet infiltration were scattered throughout the Delta. Noteworthy was the absence of major enemy initiatives against primary routes and the low incidence of terrorism and assassination, which captured documents and other sources had indicated would be heavily relied on by the enemy to gain control over the population.

(S/NF) By the end of January military activity was widespread but declining in intensity. Much of the fighting involved government efforts to break through recently established enemy road-blocks and recover hamlets seized by the enemy immediately prior to the cease-fire. Over 1,000 enemy cease-fire violations had been reported, resulting in over 2,000 enemy and approximately 400 friendly killed. It appeared that the enemy had not scored any lasting gains, ARVN counterattacks having neutralized most recent enemy successes, particularly in the Tay Ninh area and in Chuong Thien Province in the Delta. Government control of the population had not deteriorated to any significant extent.³⁰

THE KHMER REPUBLIC

(S) The infant Cambodian government found itself in a very precarious position by the end of 1971. VC/NVA units were operating without restraint in the eastern and northeastern portions of the country, and the local force units, the Khmer Communists, represented a growing threat in the countryside. The friendly Khmer forces were reeling from reverses suffered in Operation CHENLA II, designed to recapture Route 6 and had yet to prove themselves a match for the more experienced VC/NVA main force units. The year 1972 loomed as a year of serious challenge to the Khmer Re-

public in the military as well as the political arena (Fig. A-36).

NVN GOALS AND STRATEGY

(S) The actions of the VC/NVA and Khmer Communists in Cambodia were related to the North Vietnamese goal of takeover of South Vietnam. It did not appear that overthrow of the existing government in Phnom Penh and its concurrent replacement by a Communist rule was of paramount importance to VC/NVA strategy. The primary goal was to see that the Khmer Republic did not gain

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the capability to effectively interfere or impede Communist infiltration and resupply activities in support of the conflict in South Vietnam. This enemy strategy required that Cambodian Armed Forces (FANK) be kept in a defensive posture. To this end the Communist units, through limited attacks-by-fire, stand-off attacks, and infrequent ground probes, maintained sufficient pressure on the friendly units to fix them in static positions defending urban centers and lines of communication. The government was made to appear weak and unstable as the enemy sought to discredit it through propaganda activities, disrupting normal exchange of goods, isolating and harassing urban areas, making travel on major routes unsafe, and through selected terrorist incidents.

(S) The local force units, the Khmer Communists, played a growing role in this strategy. They were encouraged to accelerate the war west of the Mekong River, in order to take the pressure off the vital resupply areas along South Vietnam's border. Both the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese assisted and strengthened the Khmer Communist infrastructure and organization, aided their recruiting (which sapped manpower resources), provided monetary, logistic, and combat support when needed, and acted as a political support for their fledgling revolutionary shadow government. In turn the Khmer Communists tied down the FANK, provided some agricultural supplies, and played a role in providing security for the logistics system supporting the war in South Vietnam.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES

(S) The high tempo of the war that characterized the final months of 1971 sharply abated during the first quarter of 1972. Military activity was greatly reduced in January, as enemy initiated ground assaults fell to 15 from a previous high of 81 in December and the average number of assaults-by-fire per week declined from 100 to 45. The same pattern persisted in February as only 681 incidents were reported, lowest since July 1971.

(S) The VC/NVA main force units undertook a major relocation toward South Vietnam's Military Regions 3 and 4 border areas. By the end of February, the 5th, 7th, and 9th Divisions, along with the 69th Artillery Group, were positioned in eastern Kompong Cham Province astride the Vietnamese frontier. A decline of activity along Route 4 suggested that the NVA 1st Division was preparing to move toward Chau Doc and Kien Giang Provinces in South Vietnam's Delta. This eastward deployment of significant portions of the enemy's in-country strength temporarily reduced the threat to the Khmer Republic.

(S) Simultaneously with the decline in combat actions a noticeable increase in enemy logistics activity was reported. Enemy troop movements, vehicular activity, and riverine traffic indicated that VC/NVA units in forward positions along the border were being resupplied from traditional base areas near Kompong Thom, Kompong Cham, the Chup Plantation area, and Kratie.

(S) Despite the reduction in forces committed against the Khmer Republic, the VC/NVA managed, through judicious use of indirect fires, occasional ground probes, and selected terrorist incidents, to hold the Khmer government forces in a defensive posture. Friendly forces were unable to capitalize on the diminished threat and extend control into rural areas or to meet with and destroy Khmer Communist forces. The enemy launched a rocket and mortar attack, accompanied by a ground probe, against the capital city, Phnom Penh, and nearby Pochentong Airfield on 21 March. Although the incident was costly to the enemy, as he suffered 90% casualties, the attack was a psychological blow to the struggling government and further served to persuade the FANK to maintain a nonaggressive posture. Following these attacks a series of terror and sabotage incidents directed against shipping in Cambodia caused further erosion of the people's faith in the government's ability to defend them.

(S) During most of the 2nd quarter the Khmer Republic served as a staging and resupply area for VC/NVA troops participating in the NGUYEN HUE Offensive against South Vietnam which commenced on 31 March. The majority of enemy activity in Cambodia was related to logistics as the VC/NVA made a major push to resupply base areas serving COSVN before the onset of the heavy rains. Enemy main force units targeted against the Khmer Republic further declined as the VC/NVA 5th, 7th, and 9th Divisions moved into Binh Long Province of South Vietnam; along with the 88th and 320th NVA Regiments, also probably in South Vietnam; and the 271st NVA Independent Regiment, deployed along the Tay Ninh Province border.

(S) Despite the significant reduction in available forces the enemy continued to create the impression that government forces were under constant threat of attack. Phnom Penh received mortar and rocket attacks on 16 April and 6 May, which in combination with several grenade incidents and random attempts to mine ships in the harbor, contributed to a general feeling of uneasiness in the capital. Several roads, primarily routes 4, 15, and 16, were sporadically interdicted, thus keeping FANK tied on the defense.

(S) Possibly the most significant aspect of combat activity in the second quarter was the assumption by Khmer insurgent local force units of considerably more responsibility for fighting in that

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part of Cambodia not contiguous to South Vietnam. That the level of combat activity did not decline with the deployment to South Vietnam of many NVA units was indicative of the Khmer Communist's rising ability to conduct harassment of friendly positions and interdiction of selected lines of communication. They appeared to have increased both their political and military activity in the rural sectors and demonstrated an improved ability to recruit in the countryside as friendly forces remained tied to a defensive posture. Friendly forces, however, initiated one major operation aimed at resecuring the Siem Reap/Angkor Wat ruins from the enemy, but the offensive did not succeed.

(S) The paramount objective of VC/NVA troops in Cambodia continued to be the use of Cambodia as a logistics base in support of the effort in South Vietnam. To meet this objective the enemy further focused his attention towards the development, expansion, and security of vital supply routes with a growing role in this strategy being played by the Khmer insurgent units.

(S) As the offensive in South Vietnam bogged down, the enemy shifted some of his units back across the border into Cambodia, and the estimated number of troops targeted against the Khmer Republic increased from 5,000 to 7,000. The enemy concentrated on interdicting major routes used by government forces. Route 5 was closed from 7 to 19 July before friendly troops could reopen it. Route 2 was cut several times from July to August, and this important link between Phnom Penh to the Delta region of South Vietnam was impassable much of the time. The heaviest activity occurred along Route 1, near Kompong Trabek. Operation SORYA, a joint Khmer-South Vietnamese operation, concluded its first phase with the recapture of the town on 24 July, an event that prompted considerable rejoicing and celebrating in the national capital. But VC/NVA forces struck back in August, and supported by armor for the first time in Cambodian operations, managed to retake Kompong Trabek. However, the Khmer Army, heavily supported by tactical air, acquitted itself well in the fighting.

(S) Thereafter, the third quarter saw a continued increase of the local insurgents' role in the fighting. The insurgents were active in interdicting roads and waterways, especially Route 5, which served to create a rice scarcity in Phnom Penh. Further evidence pointed to the VC/NVA entrusting more of the mission to secure their own resupply corridors to the locals.

(S) Military activity in the Khmer Republic increased sharply in early October, apparently in response to rumors of an impending cease-fire. Following disclosures regarding negotiations aimed

at an Indochina peace settlement, both sides launched important offensives designed to extend their control prior to an agreement.

(S) Enemy sapper units conducted a daring attack on the city of Phnom Penh on 7 October. The insurgents managed to breach the city's defenses, but failed to take their designated objectives, an electrical plant and a petroleum facility. Despite losing 83 of the 103 man attacking force, the enemy created a psychological crisis in the capital on the eve of a possible cease-fire. The Chruai Chang War Bridge was partially destroyed in the attack and closed the Tonle Sap to shipping. Enemy sapper units were responsible for five attempts to disrupt shipping in the Phnom Penh harbor. Two cargo ships were sunk in the harbor and another damaged between 7 November and 15 December. In related activity the regularly scheduled Mekong River convoy was hit by rocket fire on 5 December, the 20th of the last 27 convoys to be attacked.

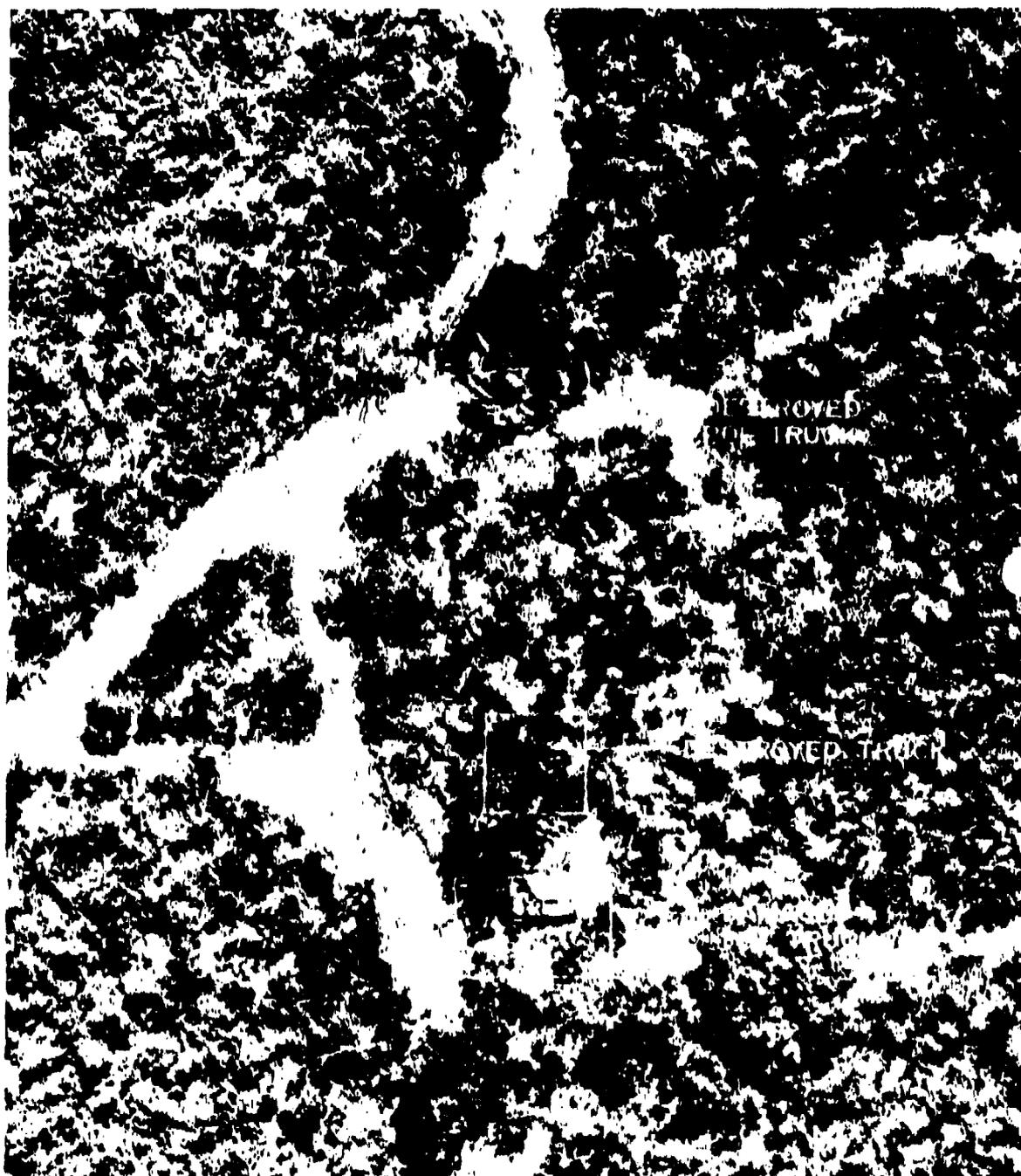
(S) Enemy forces had a virtual stranglehold on major lines of communication in the country in October, which was broken only in late November. Route 5 was back in friendly hands by 21 November, but the clearing of Route 2 was still proceeding at year's end. The road was periodically cut by suspected 1st NVA Division elements throughout the quarter, possibly to aid in their infiltration to South Vietnam's Delta region. A joint Vietnamese-Khmer operation in late December succeeded in clearing the route, but construction work was necessary before the road could be opened to traffic.

(S) The enemy continued to keep friendly forces pinned down by frequent artillery and mortar attacks directed against population centers. Kompong Cham was hit three times by stand off attacks between 21 November and 2 December, and Ang Tassom and Prey Sandek near Takeo were also shelled. The major attacks were reserved for Kompong Thom, along Route 8. The city was repeatedly shelled throughout December, and friendly forces maintaining defensive positions around the town were subjected to periodic ground probes. By the end of the month the enemy forces had taken three company size outposts around the town and forced the closing of the airfield, requiring resupply of the town by airdrop.

(S) While the attacks were consistent with the Khmer Communist's strategy of harassing isolated population centers in order to keep the FANK in a defensive posture, there was evidence that the insurgents were embarking on a new, much bolder tactic. The enemy would continue to place emphasis on engagement in widely separated areas to keep government forces thinly spread, and take measures simultaneously to undermine public confidence in

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These North Vietnamese trucks were struck by a USAF AC-130 gunship on 29 March 1972 near Ban Bak, Laos. Two were destroyed and one damaged. POL- petroleum, oil, lubricants---is a vital supply item for North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam and Cambodia.

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the Khmer Government. Rice movements to the capital would be restricted, efforts would be made to organize the population in rural areas under Communist political direction, food deliveries to urban areas would be interdicted, and sapper and terrorist action would increase.

(S/NF) In mid-January the military situation in the Khmer Republic remained unchanged. Com-

munist forces continued to dominate all of the territory east of the Mekong River and north of the Tonle Sap River and were largely responsible for road interdictions that threatened the supply lines of Phnom Penh. The Khmer Army, barely capable of containing the Communist military threat, appeared neither ready nor able to regain the initiative on the battlefield.⁵⁰

LAOS

(S/NF) As in previous years Communist forces in 1972 continued to control more than half of Laos. The area dominated by the Communists extended the length of the country along the Vietnamese border to include all rugged mountain terrain (Fig. A-37). The Pathet Lao, the local Communist forces, received all logistical support from Communist countries, primarily North Vietnam, whose forces were stationed in Laos where they supported logistical, training, and tactical activities of the Pathet Lao, conducted their own operations and maintained an extensive supply system which provided personnel and war materiel to enemy forces in the Khmer Republic and South Vietnam. It was generally thought that Hanoi controlled the military and political activities of the locals through their advisors in Pathet Lao units and high ranking members in the Lao Patriotic Front (Neo Lao Hak Xat) who were also members of the Lao Dong Party.

COMMUNIST CONTROL MECHANISM

(S/NF) In Laos there were three Communist or Communist dominated organizations: the Lao Patriotic Front, the Lao People's Party (Phak Pansoon Lao), and a small group of Lao members of the North Vietnamese Communist Party (Lao Dong Dang). The Front, the largest and most active of the three, was legal and the main front organization of the Communist Party. It was allegedly a nationalist organization whose program included the ostensible support for both the monarchy and Buddhism. The Lao People's Party was a clandestine organization which guided and directed the Front and the Pathet Lao. It maintained control over the Front through its leaders who held similar positions in that organization. The most important Communists in Laos were members of the North Vietnamese Communist Party who held the highest positions in both the Lao People's Party and the Front. They provided the link between policy decisions in Hanoi and their implementation in Laos.⁵¹

ENEMY STRATEGY AND MILITARY OPERATIONS

(S) As in past years the war in northern Laos was a strategic adjunct to the main conflict in South

Vietnam. North Vietnam, whose dominant military position on the Plain of Jars allowed it to continue to place political leverage on the Royal Lao Government, promoted peace negotiations. Apparent motives were to reduce expenditures of manpower and personnel and obtain a reduction or cessation of allied air and ground interdiction along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. As a result of stepped up US bombing and ARVN crossborder operations, the enemy was forced to increase his efforts to expand and protect the trail system in southern Laos and northern Cambodia to meet personnel and materiel requirements of Communist units operating in South Vietnam. Beginning in 1971, the enemy was required to commit troops to hold and secure major supply routes into the COSVN area.

(S) In 1972 the enemy maintained a large rear service troop concentration in southern Laos. Extensive road construction and improvement was accomplished through the rainy season. Engineer and AAA forces that withdrew from Laos were committed to the NGUYEN HUE Offensive in South Vietnam's Military Region 1 instead of returning to the North for retraining as they had in previous years. Although throughput of supplies in the rainy season was not extensive, some supplies continued to move southward throughout the year.

(S) On the tactical scene in Laos the NVA maintained an aggressive defensive posture in the Plain of Jars area. In southern Laos activities were more offensive in nature. The intent appeared to be to keep GEN Vang Pao's irregular forces confined to Long Theng and Bouam Long in northern Laos and to maintain direct pressure and threat of attack on the major Mekong River population centers at Pakse, Khong Sedone, and Savannakhet in southern Laos.

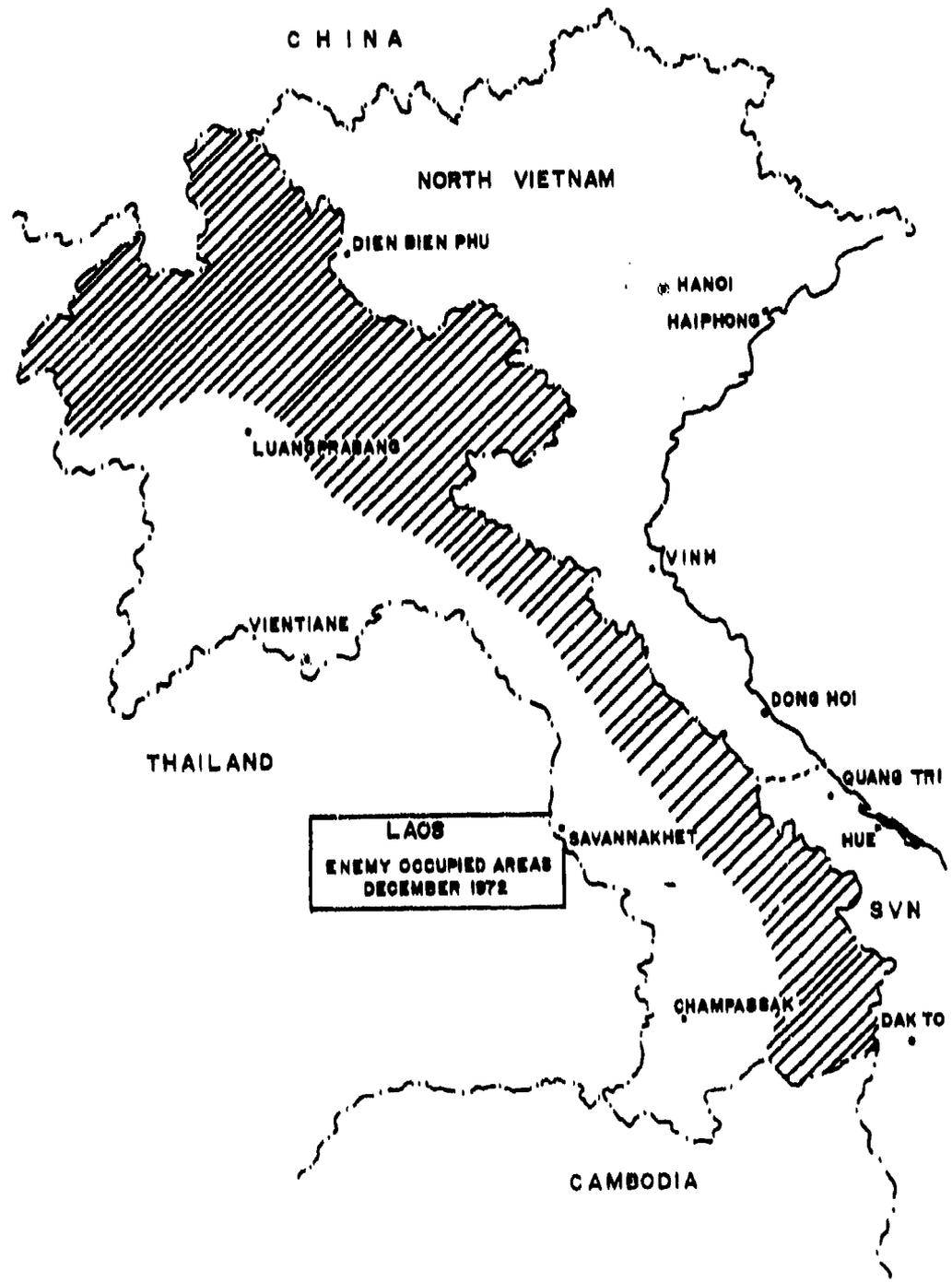
(S) When the North Vietnamese offensive in the Republic of Vietnam began to lose momentum in May, a significant portion of the NVA force in Laos was withdrawn and committed to South Vietnamese battlefields. This brought about a serious depletion of NVA reserves for Laos operations and led to almost full reliance by the enemy on maneuver instead of mass in implementing his strategy. This strategy worked well in the Plain of Jars

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where the enemy could concentrate his forces on a battlefield of limited size and operate along interior lines. In southern Laos, the enemy was required by battlefield conditions to fragment his forces in order to keep pressure on a series of widely separated locations. The offensive strategy in southern Laos was successful until the beginning of the 1972-73 dry season when Royal Laotian Government Forces launched offensive operations which brought Muong Phalane, Saravane, and Paksong back under friendly control for the first time in 1972.

(S) At the end of 1972 the enemy had firm control of the Plain of Jars in northern Laos. Friendly forces were contained in the Long Thiang-Sam Thong complex and at Bouam Long. The NVA could probably capture both Bouam Long and the Long Thiang-Sam Thong complex. In order to achieve success in attacks on these areas, however, the enemy would have had to mass practically all available forces. The danger of losses to air attack on such a concentration of his assets and the lack of reserves would probably cause the enemy to adopt the less risky course of action of continuing to maintain pressure on Long Thiang-Sam Thong and Bouam Long, attacking in strength only when friendly maneuvers threatened enemy control of the Plain of Jars. In southern Laos air strikes and ground contacts took a heavy toll of available NVA assets in both men and material in the last quarter of the year.²⁸

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

(C) As in the past the peace negotiations between the Royal Lao Government and the Lao Patriotic Front were closely tied to the Paris peace talks and showed little or no progress. Front negotiators continued to demand a nationwide cease-fire as a precondition to serious negotiations. The Lao

Government on the other hand expressed a willingness to call a bombing halt, except over the Ho Chi Minh Trail, if it could receive reciprocal guarantees from the Front that the terms of the cease-fire would be honored. Late in the year when the Front demanded the formation of a new Provisional Government of National Union, Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma stated that he was willing to consider it provided details were worked out carefully and agreed to by Lao political parties in advance and that they were in agreement with the constitution. He further stated that a supra-government political council demanded by the Lao Patriotic Front whose powers would supersede those of the government was unacceptable since the constitution accorded such powers only to the National Assembly and King's Council. He was agreeable, however, to the creation of a political council by the proposed Provisional Government after the latter was formed. Such a council would be responsible to the new Provisional Government.²⁹

(C) Following the signing of the cease-fire in Paris, Lao Internal talks took on a more positive aspect. On 30 January the Royal Lao Government agreed to hold daily secret sessions with Lao Patriotic Front representatives as requested by the Communists, who were described as enthusiastic about the talks. The Lao press, in commenting on the talks, declared "a great step forward occurred," remarking that they were now characterized by a "new ambience of detente." It added that "henceforth the conversations will enter a new phase which could lead to a negotiated settlement of the conflict." Given the past close relationship between the Paris negotiations and the Lao Internal talks and the abrupt change in the Lao Patriotic Front stance following the signing of the cease-fire, there were strong indications that a Laotian cease-fire might occur in the not too distant future.



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THE ENEMY — ANNEX A

1. Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 13034, 051040Z May 72, Subj: National Day Address by Pham Van Dong; Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 11561, 071045Z Aug 72, Subj: 20th Plenum of the Party Central Committee; MS (S), MACDI, 23 Nov 72, Subj: Dry Season Assessment (U), GDS-Not Stated.
2. MS (U), MACDI, 10 Dec 72, Subj: 1972 DRV Leadership.
3. Draft Memo (C), MACDI, 10 Dec 72, Subj: COSVN Cease-fire Planning (U), GDS-Not Stated.
4. Ibid.; MS (S), MACDO, 27 Nov 72, Subj. Command Briefing (U), p 2. GDS-Not Stated.
5. Same as #3.
6. Msg (S/NF), CINCPACFLT to AIG 286, 022113Z Dec 72, Subj: PACFLT INTSUM 271-72 (U), GDS-Not Stated; Msg (S/NF), CINCPACFLT to AIG 286, 070241Z Dec 72, Subj: PACFLT INTSUM 274-72 (U), GDS-Not Stated.
7. MACV Command History, 1971, Vol I (S/NF), p C-7, Gp-1.
8. Msg (LOU), Hong Kong to SECSTATE, 550, 241015Z Jun 72, Subj: PRC Aid to North Vietnam.
9. MS, same as #1, pp 1-2.
10. MS, same as #1, p 1; Msg (C), Hong Kong to SECSTATE, 6219, 120930Z Sep 72, Subj: Present Parameters of Chinese Aid to Hanoi (U), GDS-Not Stated.
11. Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 12367, 221110Z Aug 72, Subj: DRV Propaganda on August Revolution; Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 12230, 200335Z Aug 72, Subj: Hanoi Remains Suspicious of Moscow and Peking.
12. MS, same as #1, p 2; Msg (S), DIA 1031, 140049Z Jun 72, Subj: DIA Intel Cable 165-72 (U), GDS-Not Stated.
13. Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 0232, 201125Z Jun 72, Subj: DRV/USSR Relations; Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 8221, 030517Z Jun 72, Subj: DRV/USSR Relations (U), GDS-Not Stated.
14. Msg (C), Saigon to SECSTATE, 8570, 090050Z Jun 72, Subj: Strains in North Vietnam (U), GDS-Not Stated; Msg (C), Saigon to SECSTATE, 17072, 051050Z Dec 72, Subj: Embassy Saigon's Mission Weekly November 29 - December 5 (U), GDS-Not Stated.
15. Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 8638, 110920Z Jun 72, Subj: Current DRV/VC Propaganda.
16. Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 13034, 051040Z May 72, Subj: National Day Address by Pham Van Dong; Msg (LOU), Saigon to SECSTATE, 11561, 071045Z Aug 72, Subj: 20th Plenum of the Party Central Committee.
17. Msg (S), DIA-6 to COMUSMACV for MACDI-35, 8474, 201601Z Dec 72, Subj: Bloc Aid to DRV (C), GDS-Not Stated; MS, same as #1, p 1.
18. Msg, same as #17.
19. Same as #7, Vol II, p III-9.
20. Ibid.
21. MS, same as #4.
22. COMUSMACV Special Talking Papers (TS), 13 Oct 72, Subj: NVA/VC Intentions and Capabilities Through 7 November (U), Gp-4.
23. MS (S), MACDI, 28 Nov 72, Subj: Cease-fire Briefing (U), GDS-Not Stated; Msg (S/NF), SECSTATE to All East Asian and Pacific Diplomatic Posts, 13 Dec 72, Subj: INR Analysis "Vietnam After the Cease-fire" (U), GDS-Not Stated.
24. MACV Special Talking Papers (S), 4 Dec 72, Subj: Enemy Intentions and Capabilities During the 1972-1973 Dry Season (U), GDS-Not Stated.
25. OB Maps (C), MACDI/ISLB, 8 Jun 72, Subj. VC/NVA OB by GVN MR for Jan, Mar, Jul, and Sep 72 (U), GDS-70; COMUSMACV Special Talking Papers, Book One (TS), 4 Dec 72, Subj: Intelligence - Operations - Force Structure - Manpower (U), GDS-Not Stated.
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28. MS (S/NE), MACDI, 27 Dec 72, Subj: NVN Intelligence and Security Services (U), GDS-Not Stated.
29. Command Briefing (C), MACDI, Jul 72, Subj: Enemy Personnel Situation (U), GDS-Not Stated.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
32. Rpt (S/NF), MACJ231-0, 14 Mar 72, Subj: VC NVA Logistics Study (U), p 2, Gp-3.
33. Ibid., p 3 and Annex A.
34. Ibid., p 3 and Annex B; Rpt (S), MACDI 31-2, 13 Dec 72, Subj: Enemy Logistical Activity (U), GDS-Not Stated.
35. Same as #32.
36. Ibid., Annex D.
37. Ibid., Annex E; Rpt (C), MACJ233, 9 Apr 72 Subj: Legal Cadre: History and Methods, Operation (U), pp 17-18, GDS-Not Stated.

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38. Same as #32, pp 4-5; Rpt, same as #34, pp 5-7.
39. Same as #32, pp 5-7.
40. Rpt (C), MACJ231-8, 16 Mar 72, Subj: VC/NVA Base Areas (U), Gp-3, used in the preparation of the 1971 Command History, contains complete details on all known base areas. As of Dec 72, it was still considered current.
41. Rpt (S/NF), MACDI31-2, 18 Oct 72, Subj: Estimated Enemy Capability to Infiltrate Supplies into the Republic of Vietnam (U), p 1, Gp-4.
42. Same as #34.
43. Same as #41, p 2.
44. Ibid.
45. Same as #36.
46. MACV Special Talking Paper (S), MACDI32, 4 Dec 72, Subj: Patterns of NVA Infiltration into the Republic of Vietnam and Cambodia 1966-1972 (U), GDS-Not Stated.
47. Ibid.
48. Rpt (S/NF), MACDI, May 72, Subj: PERINTREP (U), p 6, Gp-1.
49. Ibid., pp 6-8; Rpt (S/NF), MACDI, Feb 72, Subj: PERINTREP (U), p 4, Gp-1; Rpt (S/NF), MACDI, Jun 72, Subj: PERINTREP (U), p 6, Gp-1.
50. Same as #48, pp 5 and 7.
51. Draft MS (C), MACDI, 27 Dec 72, Subj: The Enemy Offensive, 1972 (U), p IV-9, GDS-Not Stated.
52. Rpts (S/NF), MACDI, Jan-Sep 72, Subj: PERINTREP (U), Gp-1.
53. Msgs (C), MACDI32, Oct-Dec 72, Subj: Weekly Intelligence Estimate Updates 41-72 to 52-72 (U), GDS-78; Msgs (C), MACDI32, Dec 72-Jun 73, Subj: MACV Weekly Summary 1-72 and 1 to 4-73 (U), GDS-79.
54. Msg (S/NF), CINCPACFLT to AIG 286, 192124Z Jan 73, Subj: PACFLT INTSUM 09-73 (U), XGDS-2.
55. Msg (S/NF), CINCPACFLT to AIG 286, 030157Z Jan 73, Subj: PACFLT INTSUM 13-73 (U), XGDS-2; Msg (S/NF), CINCPACFLT to AIG 286, 010132Z Feb 73, Subj: PACFLT INTSUM 14-73 (U), GDS-81; Msg (C/NF), COMUSMACV to AIG 7810, 010159Z Feb 73, Subj: DISUM 32-73 (U), GDS-79; Msg (C/NF), COMUSMACV to AIG 7810, 020159Z Feb 73, Subj: DISUM 33-73 (U), GDS-79.
56. Draft MS (S/NF), MACDI, Dec 72, Subj: Cambodian Update (U), GDS-Not Stated.
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59. Msg (U), Vientiane to SECSTATE, 0751, 271206Z Jan 72, Subj: RLG Reaction to Nixon Peace Proposal; Msg (C), Vientiane to SECSTATE, 6082, 141150Z Aug 72, Subj: Lao Internal Talks (U), GDS-78; Msg (U), Vientiane to SECSTATE, 9177, 111122Z Dec 72, Subj: Lao Internal Talks: Souvanna's Views on LPF Demands.
60. Msg (C), Vientiane to SECSTATE, 0706, 301105Z Jan 73, Subj: Lao Internal Talks: Sixteenth Session — Pathet Lao Propose Daily Secret Sessions (U), GDS-Not Stated; Msg (C), Vientiane to SECSTATE, 0731, 310505Z Jan 73, Subj: RLG Agrees With Pathet Lao Proposal to Hold First Session January 31 (U), GDS-Not Stated.



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	SUBJ HANOI SAM SITE VN-004		UTM WT 71143013
	LOC 9.5NM WINW OF HANOI		NEAR RT 11 AE
	MSN BHQ 201	16 DEC 72 TOT UNK	SCALE N/A
	FRM 1573 PAM	FH16Y F/L 3"	XPWR 3 AIT UNK
BY 12 RITS	SIPIA 23029 (2 OF 3)	ISSUE DATE 17 DEC 72	PI TIME 0930H 17 DEC 72
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ANNEX B

AIR AND NAVAL OPERATIONS

AIR OPERATIONS

(U) The year 1972 was a dramatic one in the air war. As the year opened, US air power was in the midst of the usual dry season interdiction campaign focused on the Ho Chi Minh trail network. This routine was shattered as the North Vietnamese launched their offensive across the Demilitarized Zone, using tanks and mobile artillery. The answering buildup of US air power in Southeast Asia successfully demonstrated the validity of the concept of air power's worldwide mobility. Along with the buildup a new and more devastating assault upon the enemy homeland was mounted with the objective of denying enemy troops the materiel they needed to fight. The assault intensified and slackened in direct response to the political situation, demonstrating the flexibility and responsiveness of air power as an instrument of national policy. The struggle in the air ranged in action from the dogfights of jets to the unglamorous humanitarian missions of the MEDEVAC helicopters; in altitude from the invisible heights of the B-52 to the treetop level fighter runs; these and more played a role as the struggle progressed to its decisive stage.

(U) The precise impact of airpower was, of course, impossible to measure, but few would argue that the applied airpower of the component services played a decisive role in the prevention of a major disaster during the early days of the enemy offensive and certainly had a major part in the enemy's subsequent decision to try an alternative solution at the bargaining table.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

(U) Insofar as American participation was concerned, the war in Southeast Asia was a limited one since its inception. Military activity was constrained by a series of restrictions, or rules of engagement (ROE), emanating from the highest civilian authority, transmitted through the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to the Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC), and thence to the US forces operating within Southeast Asia. These were a detailed set of rules defining the limits within which American air power could be applied within the theater of operations. All participants and planners from commander to crew member were required to learn and abide by these rules.

(U) Air operating authorities, received by air commanders from JCS through CINCPAC "essentially identified an air resource that could be used

for a specific purpose in a given area for a specified period of time" and served as the basic guidelines within which operational commanders prepared the specific operations orders for air strikes.)

(TS) For each country there was a set of rules of engagement which governed operations in the airspace above its boundaries. They defined where and how areas could be struck and were designed to permit maximum flexibility while providing safeguards to keep to an absolute minimum danger to friendly forces, indigenous noncombatants, hospitals, monuments or religious shrines, and other specified places. As an example, the following is a list of the targets in North Vietnam which could not be struck without positive instructions from JCS for each specific target and on each occasion:

—Dams, dikes, and locks.

—Fishing boats.

—Sampan and houseboats in populated areas.

—Watercraft in offshore waters outside the 12 nautical mile territorial limit unless hostile intent was shown.

—Airfields on which third country aircraft were present.

—Third country shipping, including logistics craft.

—Airborne helicopters and transport craft.

—Known or suspected hospitals or religious shrines.

—Hydroelectric power plants.

There were also designated restricted areas in which no combat activity was authorized; for example, PW camps and third country ships within North Vietnamese waters and the areas immediately surrounding them to a distance of 400 yards.²

(U) Rules of engagement were changed with shifts in national policy; at different times air activities over North Vietnam were (1) forbidden; (2) permitted only in "hot pursuit" or in response to fire from within the North; (3) permitted up to 18° north latitude; (4) permitted up to 20° 30' north latitude; (5) permitted anywhere in North Vietnam except those areas specifically forbidden by the ROE. Changes to the ROE were directed by national authority at the highest levels.

(U) Subordinate commanders had the authority to make the rules of engagement more restrictive, but not to loosen them. For example, representatives of the Forces Armees Nationales Khmeres (FANK), the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF),

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and the US Military Assistance Command Vietnam (USMACV) negotiated the ROE for the Khmer Republic within the JCS guidelines. They were then made part of the applicable operations orders.

(U) All air crewmembers, controllers, planners, and commanders were given formalized ROE training upon initial assignment to the theater. They were required to pass closed book examinations on the ROE. They were required to take recurring refresher training and were briefed specifically and in detail whenever a change occurred. Pre-mission briefings also included frequent reminders of applicable ROE.⁵

RESPONSE OF AIR ASSETS TO THE NVA BUILDUP AND OFFENSIVE

(U) One of the more remarkable stories to emerge from the enemy buildup and assault on South Vietnam during 1972 was the rapid augmentation which bolstered the US aircraft inventory in response to the surprise attack. During the early months of 1972 US forces were in the process of drawing down; USMC air assets had been removed completely; USAF and USN resources were greatly reduced; and Army air inventories were similarly declining in number. It seemed logical for the enemy to assume that this would in turn greatly restrict the US capability to extend the protective envelope of air power over the ARVN forces. The enemy strategy may have been based on a series of decisive moves designed to overwhelm the South Vietnamese Army before the US found the will or the capability to re-enter the war on an expanded scale. The buildup of air power that followed was a tribute to the foresightedness of the commanders concerned and a testimony to the effectiveness of modern concepts of mobility, whereby forces dispersed throughout the world could quickly be concentrated and applied to meet an unexpected situation.

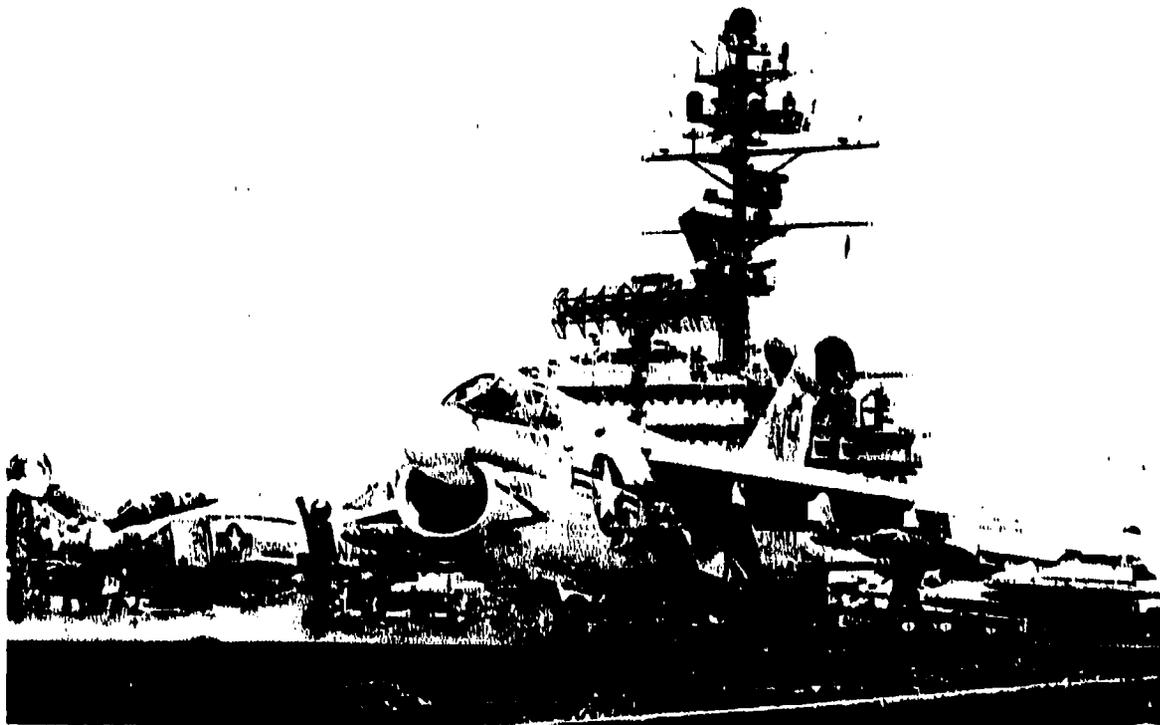
(TS) In early November 1971 the completion of Increment IX of the US phasedown had reduced the number of in-theater US tactical fighter squadrons to 11. USAF commanders felt that contingencies could arise which might require more sorties than that force could provide. To provide for augmentation, in the event it was required, the Commander, Pacific Air Forces (CINCPACAF) Operations Plan (OPLAN) C101/COMMANDO FLASH was created. This plan called for TACAIR forces in Southeast Asia to be bolstered by up to 18 F-4 aircraft from the 405th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) at Clark Air Base, the Philippines. The deployed aircraft would go to Da Nang, Ubon, and Udorn and be integrated into host units. Authority to implement COMMANDO FLASH rested with the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁴

(S) In late December 1971 the Commander, 7th Air Force requested and received a partial implementation of COMMANDO FLASH. Six aircraft from Clark AB, the Philippines, were dispatched to Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. In late January six additional aircraft from COMMANDO FLASH resources were deployed to Ubon and Udorn RTABs, Thailand, and Da Nang AB in South Vietnam, bringing the total augmentation force to twelve. These forces were employed in heightening the interdiction campaign against the enemy. In February the entire COMMANDO FLASH force was deployed. A 20 percent increase in B-52 strikes was also authorized.⁶

(TS) In February plans were made for an additional deployment, code named COMMANDO FLY (OPLAN C103). Assets to be deployed were ten F-105 aircraft and three tactical fighter squadrons (TFS) of F-4Ds (48 aircraft) from Kusan, Korea. The F-105s were to be deployed to Korat RTAFB, Thailand, while two of the F-4 squadrons were to go to Udorn RTAFB and one to Korat RTAFB. By 19 February the US command was concerned enough to request that one F-4 squadron of the COMMANDO FLY assets be moved to Clark AB for theater indoctrination and to be in a position to very quickly go to the deployment bases when required. The 35th TFS was so positioned on 16 March.⁶

(S) Meanwhile, naval assets were also being increased. During January and February the USN had maintained three aircraft carriers (CVA) on station off Vietnam. Counting regenerating time spent off station, the CVAs maintained roughly a 1.6 (the second CVA was on station 18 of 30 days) on station rate. In anticipation of the enemy attack the carrier KITTY HAWK was deployed three weeks early, arriving on station 9 March. The CONSTELLATION went off the line on 22 March and stopped in Japan briefly prior to return to the United States. It was still in Japan when the enemy offensive broke and was returned to station, arriving off Vietnam on 8 April. The redeployment enabled the Navy to keep four carriers on station. However, this posture could not be maintained for long unless further augmentation was given to allow for regenerating (i.e., refueling, replenishment, and minor repair). Also the CONSTELLATION was overdue for return to the United States. To solve this problem, on 6 April the MIDWAY was ordered from the Eastern Pacific area (EASTPAC) to augment Western Pacific area (WESTPAC) assets. In addition, SARATOGA was ordered from the Atlantic fleet to join the Pacific fleet. Finally on 27 May ORISKANY was deployed to WESTPAC to relieve the CONSTELLATION and the AMERICA was sent from the East Coast to the Pacific to relieve CORAL SEA. This deployment enabled the Navy to keep the desired four carriers on station at all times. The

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An A-7 readied for launch on the USS CONSTELLATION.

antisubmarine carrier TICONDEROGA was also dispatched to the South China Sea briefly in May but was not configured for the type mission needed in Vietnam and thus was returned in early June.⁷

(S) In February the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT), ADM Bernard E. Clarey, advised ADM John S. McCain, Commander in Chief Pacific, that the 1st Marine Air Wing at Iwakuni Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS), Japan was available to augment TACAIR resources in the event of an enemy assault. At the time a decision was made not to employ the USMC assets; however, when the NVA offensive struck, it was quickly decided to utilize this resource. Two USMC F-4 squadrons, VFMA 115 and VFMA 232, were ordered to leave 6 April for deployment to Da Nang AB. By 8 April 28 aircraft were in place at Da Nang and by 11 April the newly formed Marine Air Group (MAG) 15 was flying combat missions from Da Nang. On 10 April another Marine Unit, VFMA 212, was ordered to Da Nang from Kaneohe MCAS, Hawaii with 12 additional F-4 aircraft. They arrived at Da Nang on 15 April and by 17 April were flying combat missions. The USMC units were employed

for sorties in Military Region 1 and over North Vietnam. At the same time a group of Marine A-4s of MAG 12 began operations from Bien Hoa AB, Vietnam (see USMC air operations).

(S) USAF commanders quickly realized that further augmentation would be required beyond that of COMMANDO FLASH and COMMANDO FLY. On 5 April GEN Creighton W. Abrams made a request for additional TACAIR deployments. The Joint Chiefs of Staff replied the same day by setting up a string of aircraft deployments known collectively as CONSTANT GUARD (TAC OPLAN 100).⁸

(S) The complete operation was composed of six separate movements. The first of these, CONSTANT GUARD I, consisted of moving the 334th and 336th TFS of 18 F-4E aircraft each from Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina to Ubon RTAFB, Thailand and 12 F-105 aircraft of the 561st TFS from McConnell AFB, Kansas to Korat RTAFB. The second phase, CONSTANT GUARD II, involved the deployment of the 308th TFS and 58th TFS from Homestead and Eglin AFBs, Florida respectively to Udorn RTAFB, Thailand. The third phase,

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CONSTANT GUARD III, moved the 49th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) complete with headquarters from Holloman AFB, New Mexico to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand. The fourth phase, CONSTANT GUARD IV, entailed the movements of two C-130 squadrons of 16 planes each from Langley AFB, Virginia and Little Rock AFB, Arkansas respectively to Ching Chuan Kang AB, Taiwan.¹⁰

(S) At the same time he had requested increased TACAIR capability, GEN Abrams had requested increased B-52 assets. This in turn required additional support in electronic warfare aircraft (EB-66) and tanker aircraft (KC-135). Forty-nine additional B-52s, 32 KC-135s, and 16 B-66s were dispatched to the Pacific area.

(S) Thus, during the period from 1 April 1972 to 24 May the US had augmented its combat air fleet by nearly 500 aircraft, which permitted the very large increase in the sortie rate. The capability to bring worldwide assets to bear, to transport entire air wings with their men and equipment across the globe and have them fully operational in such a short time, was a capability that the enemy probably underestimated but which was impressed upon him in a very forceful way. Within a short time the enemy faced the largest air fleet he had yet confronted. The price of his miscalculation came high.

(S) On 25 September CONSTANT GUARD V was executed. The USAF deployed 48 F-111 tactical fighters of the 420th TFS and the 480th TFS to Takhli RTAFB, Thailand from Nellis AFB, Nevada and redeployed the 49th TFW to its home base at Holloman AFB, New Mexico. The F-111 added a new dimension to the LINEBACKER campaign (See Air Operations over North Vietnam). It was possible, after their addition, to have night, all weather capability using low level attack techniques. LINEBACKER SHERRY, as these missions were named, began operations on 28 September, the night after arrival at Takhli.

(S) On 10 October 1972 CONSTANT GUARD VI was executed to realign the force structure. The 354th TFW with 72 A-7 aircraft deployed from Myrtle Beach AFB, North Carolina to Korat RTAFB, Thailand. The acquisition of these assets released the following TDY assets:

- The 35th TFS returned 18 F-4s from Korat RTAFB to Kunsan AB, Korea.
- The 58th TFW returned to Eglin AFB but left their F-4s at Udorn RTAFB.
- the 523d TFS redeployed from Udorn RTAFB with 18 F-4s to Clark AB.
- The 308th TFS redeployed 19 F-4s from Udorn RTAFB to Homestead AFB.
- The 4th TFS and 421st TFS moved 48 F-4s from Takhli RTAFB to Udorn RTAFB.

The main purpose of the move was to modernize the force and to return temporary assets to their normal stations.¹⁰

AIR OPERATIONS OVER NORTH VIETNAM

(TS) In November of 1968 President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered a halt to US offensive air operations over North Vietnam. Rules of engagement were established which permitted US aircraft to enter on combat missions over North Vietnam only in "hot pursuit" of aircraft which had taken hostile actions against allied aircraft or which had acted in support of VC/NVA activity. Fire could be directed against surface to air missiles (SAM) sites only if these sites had just fired on allied aircraft. The ROE permitted unarmed reconnaissance aircraft overflight of North Vietnam below 20° latitude. They could be escorted as far as 19° latitude by combat aircraft, which were only permitted to engage the enemy in response to enemy initiated action. Over the next year and a half several specific exceptions were granted to permit the striking of specific installations which presented a clear threat to US aircraft; however, permission was rarely and reluctantly given due to the political sensitivity of the matter.

(TS) At the beginning of January 1972 the ROE for North Vietnam were the same as they had been in April 1970, a summary of which follows:

—Enemy electronic warfare/ground control intercept sites in North Vietnam could not be attacked at any time unless specifically authorized as part of an approved operation.

—SAM/AAA sites and associated equipment could be struck in immediate protective reaction only when south of 20° latitude north.

—Incursions of North Vietnamese airspace north of 20° latitude north were not authorized without JCS approval except when in immediate pursuit of hostile enemy aircraft. Immediate protective reaction against SAM/AAA sites north of 20° latitude was authorized under the prudential rule. These air operating authorities remained constant through the end of March 1972, when the opening of the enemy offensive necessitated their alteration.¹¹

January Through March 1972

(S) As 1972 opened, the US phasedown continued to progress. The enemy was becoming increasingly bold about using MIG interceptors to attempt to stop the US interdiction effort in Laos. Of a total of 35 incursions of Laotian airspace by MIGs in January, the majority came from Phuc Yen Airfield in North Vietnam. Attempts to neutralize enemy ground-controlled intercept (GCI) radars by the use of AGM-75 missiles failed on two occasions, and the enemy fired a total of 31 SAMs against

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USN and USAF aircraft. On 10 January a MIG 21 was downed by a USN F-4J in a dogfight. There were no US aircraft lost in North Vietnam during the month. A new enemy airstrip with 6,300 foot runways was noted under construction north of Khe Phat, North Vietnam. Estimates on completion indicated operational readiness sometime around March.

(S) During February there were only eight MIG incursions into Laos from Phuc Yen; however, SAM firings increased to 52, downing three US aircraft. During one two-day period 40 SAMs were fired at US reconnaissance and strike aircraft. Intelligence sources noted the greatest buildup of SAM activity ever south of 20° latitude. There were six SAM regiments of four battalions each as opposed to half that number one year ago. A USAF F-4D downed a MIG on the 21st of February, expending three Sparrow missiles against it. There were no US aircraft lost to MIGs during the month.

(S) In March, there were four MIG engagements, three of which resulted in downed MIGs. There were a total of 25 SAMs expended against USAF and USN aircraft. SAM sites were extended further southward with two sites being located within eight miles of the Demilitarized Zone. This extended the threat envelope to 18 miles inside South Vietnam. Fourteen of 30 reconnaissance sorties were fired upon during this period. There were no US aircraft downed in March inside North Vietnam.¹²

The Offensive

(S) On the night of 20 March 1972 the North Vietnamese shattered the quiet of Quang Tri Province by launching the heaviest artillery barrage since the Tet Offensive of 1968. The reason for this outburst of activity was not apparent at the time, but became clear shortly afterward when, on the next morning, an enemy force estimated at 80,000 men surged across the Demilitarized Zone and poured into South Vietnam toward Quang Tri City. On that historic day the air war, which had continued to wind down even in the face of an enemy buildup, entered a new phase. Gone was the enemy pretext of civil war or popular uprising. The entry of eight uniformed NVA divisions into South Vietnam ended the charade. All air assets were immediately pressed into service in the South. Only after the intensity and scope of the enemy effort was fully realized was action taken to carry the war to its source, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

(TS) On 2 April the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) directed TACAIR strikes and naval gunfire support on the North up to 25 miles north of the Demilitarized Zone to be directed against supply concen-

trations.¹³ On 3 April the authority was extended to 17° 30' north latitude and then to 18° on 4 April. On 5 April offensive TACAIR strikes against North Vietnam were authorized under the code name FREEDOM TRAIN. On 9 April operations were to be extended to 19° north. All through April authorities were broadened until operations were authorized below 20° north except for specifically forbidden targets. On May 2 reconnaissance was authorized up to 25° 25' north, and on May 9 JCS extended offensive operations to all areas of North Vietnam below the PRC Buffer Zone (the PRC Buffer Zone was that area within 30 nautical miles of the Chinese border from the Laotian border east to 106° east and then within 25 nautical miles of the Chinese border to the Tonkin Gulf) except those areas exempted. For purposes of command and control the territory of North Vietnam was divided into Route Packs (RP) and responsibilities were assigned as follows (Fig. B-1): RP 1 was assigned to COMUSMACV control and considered an extension of the battlefield. RP 5 and RP 6A were assigned to Commander in Chief Pacific Air Forces (CINCPACAF). Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet (CINCPACFLT) was assigned RP 2, 3, 4 and 6B. A committee composed of representatives from these tasked organizations was established in SEA to coordinate items of mutual interest. It should be noted that the initial operations order and all subsequent ones contained these or similar words:

Attacks will be conducted so as to minimize danger to the civilian populace to the extent feasible without compromising effectiveness. It is essential that the strike forces are completely familiar with current restrictions, and exercise care in weapons employment to minimize civilian casualties and avoid known or suspected hospitals and religious shrines, POW camps, and third country shipping.¹⁴

April and May 1972

(S) During April, activity increased dramatically in response to the enemy offensive. There were 1,060 US sorties directed against North Vietnam during the month. Sortie targeting was directed toward destroying the enemy's capability to continue the offensive in South Vietnam. On 16 April the Hanoi-Haiphong areas were struck on Operation FREEDOM PORCH BRAVO, a combined assault by USN and USAF TACAIR and USAF B-52s in North Vietnam. A total of 82 B-52 sorties were flown north of the Demilitarized Zone. Eleven US aircraft were lost to enemy action as follows: nine to SAMs, one to a MIG, and one to AAA. Seven hundred and seventy-seven SAMs, a record number, were fired at US aircraft.

B-5

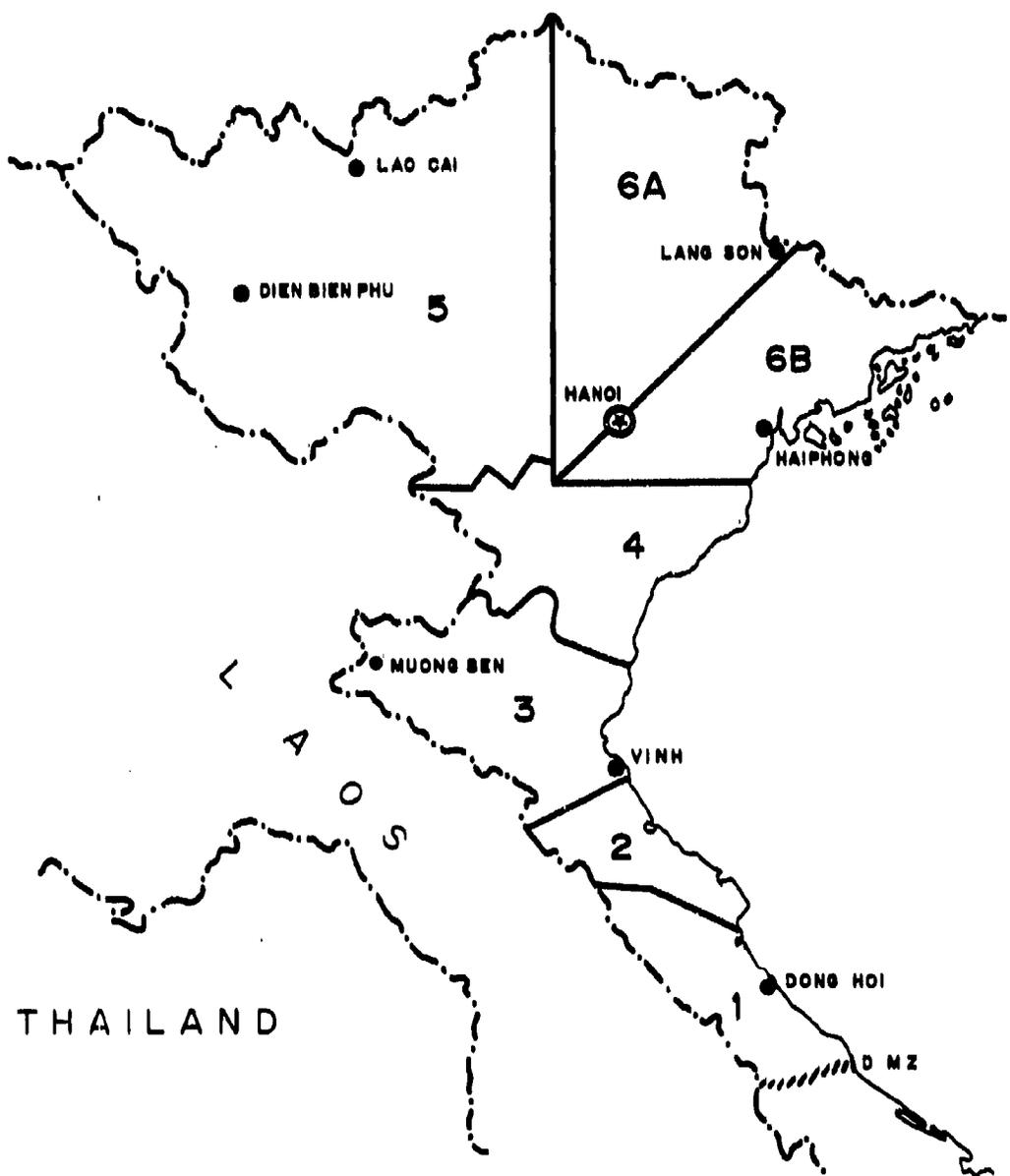
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NORTH VIETNAM OPERATING AREAS
PEOPLES REPUBLIC
OF
C H I N A



THAILAND

Source: MACDO

Figure: B-1

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An A-1 from the USS KITTYHAWK pulls away sharply from its target, the Hai Duong railway Bridge in North Vietnam on 10 May 1971.

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(S) The early part of May saw a continuation of the FREEDOM TRAIN operation, followed by the initiation of LINEBACKER operations. The most dramatic event occurred on the 9th, when USN aircraft from the USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43) mined Haiphong harbor and its approaches, using delay action fuzes set to arm 72 hours after sowing. The next day the approaches to the other North Vietnamese harbors and some of the inland waterway networks were sown with MK-38 destructor bombs (an air-dropped mine) set to arm simultaneously with the naval mines dropped at Haiphong. The President informed the world that neutral shipping had 72 hours to leave Haiphong before the mines self-armed (as he spoke Navy aircraft were sowing them). This was part of a coordinated plan involving all services and directed against the logistics network of the enemy. Its objective was to deny the North Vietnamese armies in South Vietnam the means with which to fight. The mining was merely the beginning, for the month of May saw a 230 percent increase in US air sorties over North Vietnam. Of these, 67 percent of the attack and 73 percent of the support sorties were flown by the USN. On the 10th of May a new operation, code name LINEBACKER, was initiated.

LINEBACKER I

(TS) As the situation in the South continued to deteriorate, a decision was made to execute the operation which became known as LINEBACKER. The operation was initiated with the specific objectives of isolating North Vietnam from outside sources of supply, destroying existing stockpiles of materiel, and eliminating military command and control functions. The plan developed to accomplish these objectives included specific categories of targets which were to be struck. First were lines of communication (LOC) targets, i.e., bridges and rail lines, including the critical northeast rail line, which tied the Hanoi area to China. This line was designated as the first priority target system. The northwest railroad, which also functioned as a back-up logistics corridor from Hanoi to China, was also given high priority. Bridges, railyards, rail spurs, and tunnels, plus stored logistics materials vital to the war effort, were also included as were petroleum storage areas and pipeline and distribution systems. Electrical production plants and distribution systems were also targeted.¹⁵

(U) Because the codeword LINEBACKER had not reached the field, the first strike was flown under the code name ROLLING THUNDER ALPHA. The primary targets were the Paul Doumer railway and highway bridge and the Yen Vien railroad yard. Strike tactics called for guided ordnance on the bridge and unguided bombs on the yard. The mission

plan consisted of a small strike operation supported by chaff (aluminum strips dropped by aircraft to confuse enemy radar), Iron Hand (F-105s specially configured to work against enemy fire control radars), strike, escort, and combat air patrol (CAP) sorties. The mission flow (Fig. B-2) was based on an H hour of 0300Z, 10 May 1972. Weather reconnaissance, search and rescue CAP (SARCAP), barrier CAP (BARCAP - escort for electronic countermeasures aircraft), the SAR team (1 HC-130, 2 HH-53s, and 2 A-1s), plus two photo reconnaissance aircraft were to follow the strike by 5 minutes for bomb damage assessment (BDA) photography, making a total of 88 aircraft to support 32 strike aircraft over the target. Figure B-2 also illustrates how the mission was timed and coordinated and shows the complexity of the operation. Figure B-3 shows the placing of the various support elements and also shows refueling tracks used in the approach to the target.

(S) Results of the mission, as reported by aircrews, were:

—Twenty-two K-84 laser guided bombs and seven MK-84 electro-optically guided bombs were dropped on the bridge, causing heavy damage.

—One hundred eighty-four MK-82 unguided bombs were dropped on the Yen Vien railroad yard, cutting tracks and damaging boxcars and warehouses.

—Nineteen AGM-45s and six AGM-78s were expended by the Iron Hand force as suppression against 42 reported SAM firings. The entire force encountered heavy concentrations of AAA over the target area. Nine MIG-19s and seven MIG-21s were observed, of which three were downed with an expenditure of 31 air intercept missiles. USAF TACAIR losses were two F-4s downed by MIG-19 cannon fire.¹⁶

(S) After 10 May missions over North Vietnam (now known as LINEBACKER) were planned daily and flown when weather permitted.

(S) Throughout the first three months of the campaign the size of the strike force remained relatively constant at eight to 12 bombers per mission. Guided ordnance primarily was used to inflict the maximum damage on the specific targets while at the same time minimizing collateral damage to the surrounding civilian areas. Two types of guided bombs were available—electro-optical guided (EOGB) and laser guided (LGB). EOGBs were used against high contrast targets, such as large bridges. Although fairly good results were obtained from these weapons during the early phases of LINEBACKER, their use was limited throughout the campaign because of high individual cost, low reliability, and vulnerability of the aircraft to ground

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ROLLING THUNDER ALPHA

H HOUR 0300Z
10 MAY 72

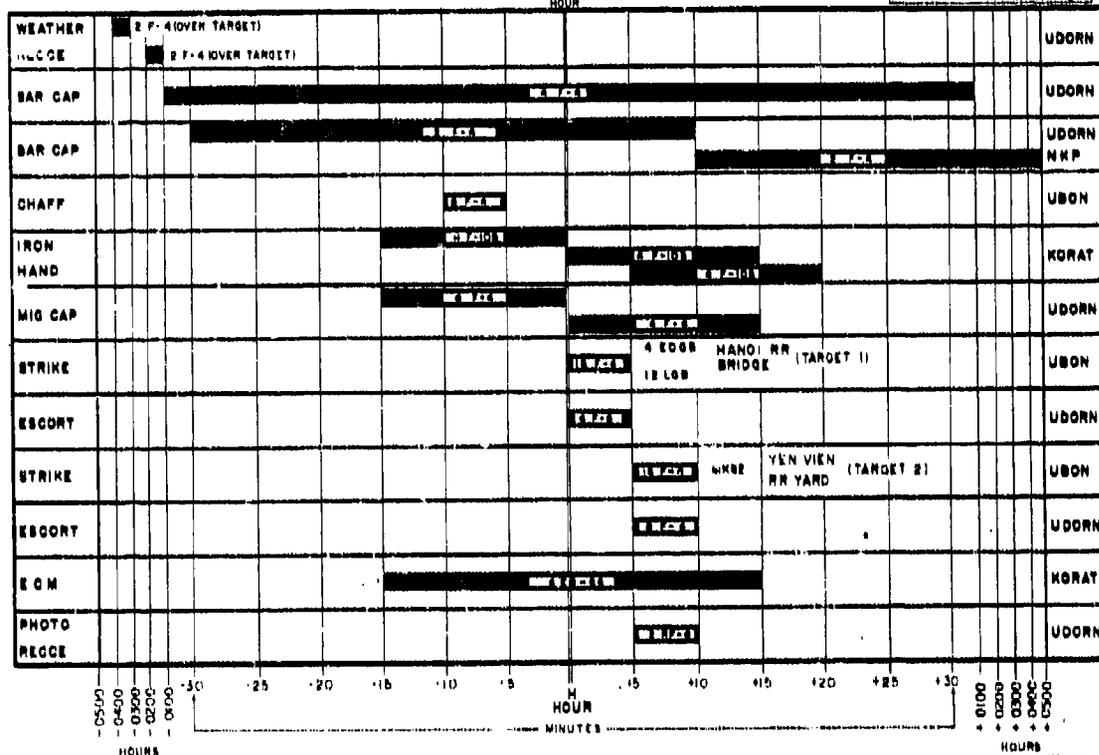


Figure B-2

Source: MACDO

fire during delivery. As a result, LGBs were preferable when guided ordnance was required.

(S) The laser bombs proved to be highly accurate and successful against point targets. Because of their accuracy and their high delivery altitude, they afforded high survivability to the strike force in high threat areas. Fewer aircraft were required to destroy the same target than with conventional ordnance. The overall effect on LINEBACKER operations was that the strike element size was determined by the number of targets rather than the difficulty of each individual target.¹⁷

(S) The enemy responded to the LINEBACKER assault with predictable fury. On 10 May, 41 MIGs rose to meet the challenge of the US aircraft. Eleven of these were destroyed, as were six of the US aircraft. During the month there were 428 SAM firings which downed six US aircraft. The SAM/loss ratio stood at 72:1 (i.e., 72 SAMs fired per US aircraft loss).

(S) A 1 June 1972 HQ PACAF intelligence summary analyzed the assault on the North's logistics

effort. The naval mining had effectively closed Haiphong harbor, forcing the enemy to rely on his rail and highway lines of communication. The complementary air assault gained a complete interdiction of the rail lines leading into Hanoi. Most of the targets were railroad bridges, against which laser-guided bombs proved very effective. The northwest rail line alone had 11 bridges, of which nine were destroyed and one was damaged. To the west of Hanoi four railroad bridges and two rail-yards were removed from the system. Further outages were reported to the south. The end result was to force the enemy to take to the highways. This, of course, required trucks and fuel, thus making petroleum pipelines and fuel storage areas prime targets, along with highway bridges. In defending the lines of communication, the enemy had lost thirty-nine MIGs since March. It was estimated that supplies flowing from the north were not sufficient to support sustained operations.¹⁸

June - September 1972

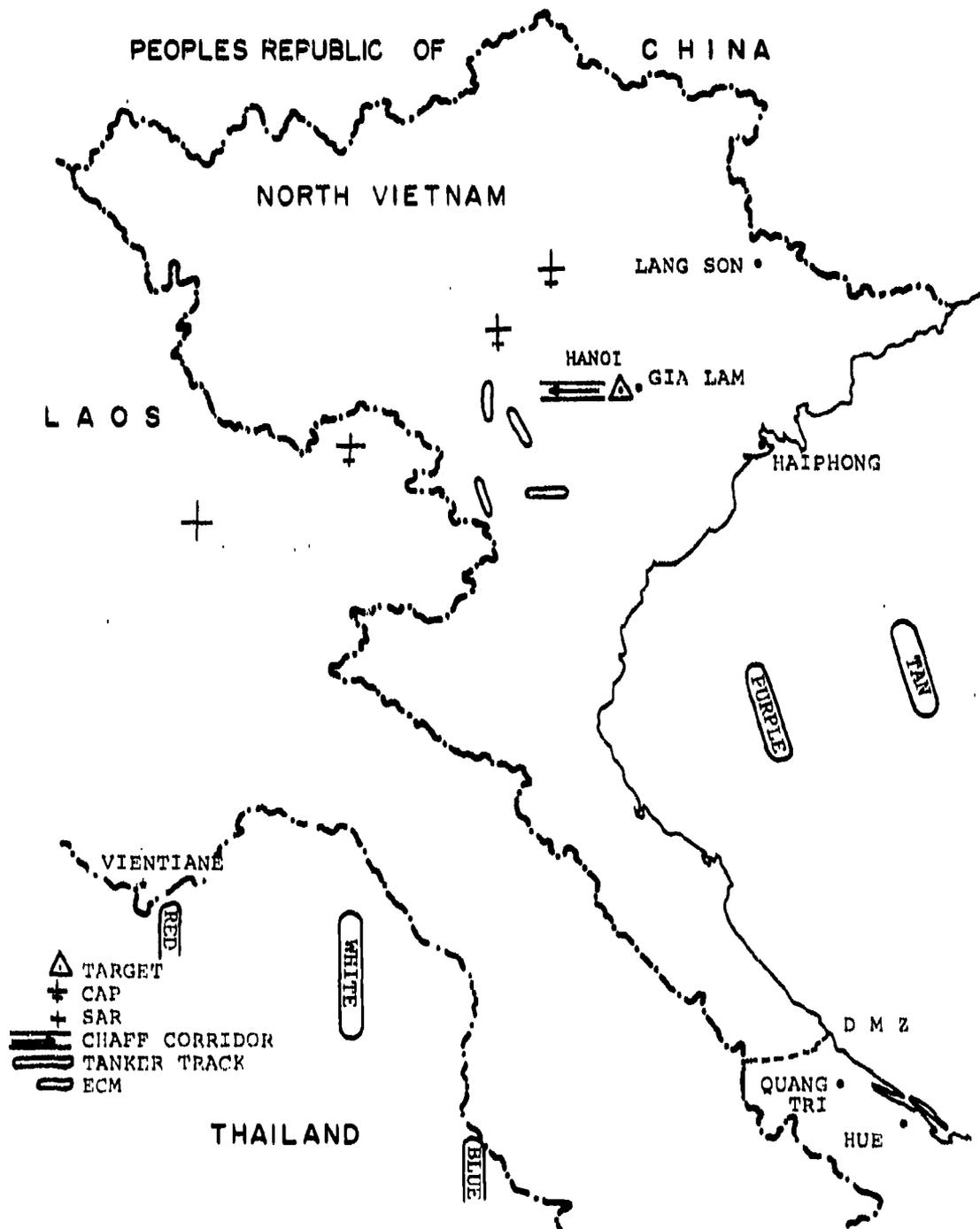
(S) During the months of June, July, and August

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ROLLING THUNDER ALPHA



Source: MACDO

Figure: B-3

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An F-4 Phantom fighter bomber.

the intensity of the LINEBACKER effort continued to increase. June saw an eleven percent increase in sorties over North Vietnam, as compared to May, and the July to August sortie totals reflected a further six percent increase for each month. These increases can be at least partially attributed to increased US air assets being available as augmentation forces arrived in Southeast Asia, plus the improving situation in South Vietnam, which reduced the priority of operations there and made more sorties available to LINEBACKER planners. The September sortie total was slightly lower primarily due to marginal weather, as the autumn transitional season began. There were two tropical storms during the month which produced conditions of reduced visibility over North Vietnam and also forced the naval task forces in the Gulf of Tonkin to withdraw to safer waters for short periods of time.

(S) B-52 activity in North Vietnam also increased in June, July, and August and decreased slightly in September. Targeting for these strikes was confined to Route Packs 1 and 2 and was directed for the most part, at storage areas, troop concen-

trations, and enemy lines of communication.

(S) Heavy use of night raids by both the USN and USA characterized July and August but this, too, tapered off in September as the weather became worse. Over the entire period, June through September, the USN furnished over sixty percent of the effort in both attack and support sorties over North Vietnam.¹⁸

(S) The USMC entered the air war over North Vietnam during July. Marine activity included TAC-AIR strikes in RPs 1 and 2 and the use of USMC helicopter gunships in hunter-killer (MARHUK) operations directed against the enemy waterborne logistic craft (WBLC). This was an attempt to counter the enemy efforts to circumvent the US mine blockade by unloading neutral merchant ships on to lighterage offshore. The MARHUK units, deployed on landing platform helicopter (LPH) ships which were operating in the Gulf of Tonkin, proved to be a very effective way to hinder the enemy effort.

(S) Enemy air defenses during the period June through September continued at a high level. The surface to air missile (SAM) proved to be the

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most effective enemy weapon, downing 22 US aircraft in firing 1,232 missiles for a SAM fired: US aircraft downed ratio of 56:1. During June and July the North Vietnamese MIGs downed twelve US aircraft in air to air combat while losing eleven of their own. In August and September, however, a total of fifteen MIGs were downed with a loss of only one US plane. Tactical adjustments account for the abrupt reversal. Enemy antiaircraft artillery reaction continued to be intense, especially around high priority point targets.²⁰

Air to Air Combat - The MIG Killers

(C) A byproduct of the LINEBACKER operations over North Vietnam was the attainment of the coveted status of "Ace", awarded to those who by their direct action downed five enemy aircraft. Not since the Korean War had America produced an ace. On 10 May two men qualified simultaneously for entry into that elite circle. Navy LT Randall Cunningham (pilot) and his radar operator, LT (j.g.) William Driscoll, were flying a flak support mission over Haiphong. Cunningham's flight was engaged by a flight of MIGs. In the melee that followed, three MIG 17s were downed by this team from the USS CONSTELLATION. Returning to the carrier low on fuel, Cunningham and Driscoll were shot down by an SA-2 missile and were forced to eject over the Gulf of Tonkin, but were safely recovered by a search and rescue helicopter. Their bag of three, added to two which they had downed earlier, filled out the magic number of five. It was also the first time that a non-pilot (Driscoll) had ever been accredited as an ace; however, in an aircraft as complex as the F-4 the radar operator was equally important in acquiring the target and vectoring the pilot into the "kill" position. By September, three USAF officers—CPT Richard "Steve" Ritchie, CPT Charles D. Delleveue, and CPT Jeff Feinstein—had also become aces.

(U) In a special category was US Navy Chief Radarman Larry B. Nowell. As a radar controller aboard the USS CHICAGO in the Gulf of Tonkin, Chief Nowell vectored aircraft on MIG intercepts. He is credited with successfully completing intercepts resulting in twelve MIG kills. For his accomplishment Chief Nowell was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, the first Navy enlisted man to win this award in combat in modern times.

(U) Figure B-4 shows the air to air scoreboard for 1 Jan 72 to 31 Jan 73.
October 1972 - January 1973

(S) LINEBACKER operations during October were affected by the imposition of two restrictions. On 17 October sorties over North Vietnam were restricted to a total of 150 per day, including support sorties. This greatly cut down on the number of attack sorties. On 23 October all bombing north

MIGS DOWNED BY US AIRCRAFT

TYPE	USAF	USN/USMC	TOTAL
MIG 17	0	15	15
MIG 19	9	2	11
MIG 21	40	8	48
TOTAL			74

US AIRCRAFT DOWNED BY MIGS

TYPE	USAF	USN/USMC	TOTAL
F-4	21	3	24
F-105	1	0	1
A-7	0	1	1
RA-4	0	1	1
TOTAL			27

Source: PACAF AIR SUMMARY

Figure: B-4

of the 20th parallel was halted by Presidential order. Another factor which reduced operations was the relatively poor weather. All of these combined to produce a 14 percent decrease in sorties over North Vietnam. USN aircraft provided 53 percent of the attack sorties and 64 percent of the support sorties over the north.

(S) Air to air combat results were six MIG 21s and one MIG 19 downed with two USAF F-4D falling to enemy airmen. October witnessed a 3 percent decline in night sorties with 21 percent of the attack and eight percent of support sorties being conducted at night. USAF aircraft flew 38 percent of their armed reconnaissance sorties at night and the USN armed reconnaissance night sorties accounted for 19 percent of their effort. These figures represent an 82 percent increase of night sorties on the part of the USAF and was due to increased use of the F-111 aircraft. In fact, all of the 440 F-111 sorties were flown at night, and 270 of these were targeted into RPs 5, 6A, and 6B. USN night sorties were confined to RPs 2, 3, and 4 with the exception of 116 missions within RPs 5 and 6.

(S) There was 211 SAM firings during October of which 142 were directed at USAF aircraft and 69 at USN/USMC aircraft. Losses to SAMs accounted for two USAF F-4s and one USN A-7 for a 70:1 SAM/kill ratio. During the same period there were 824 AAA reactions within North Vietnam which accounted for only two aircraft lost, one USAF F-111 and one USMC A-6.

(S) The bombing halt north of the 20th parallel continued during November. This resulted in a reduction of TACAIR sorties as attack and support sorties dropped 32 and 14 percent respectively. MIG activity was minimal and there were no significant engagements. On the other hand, SAM activity was very high with 165 SAMs being fired at US aircraft, 89 of which were fired at the B-52s. There were three US aircraft lost to SAMs, including the first B-52 combat loss of the war. Since

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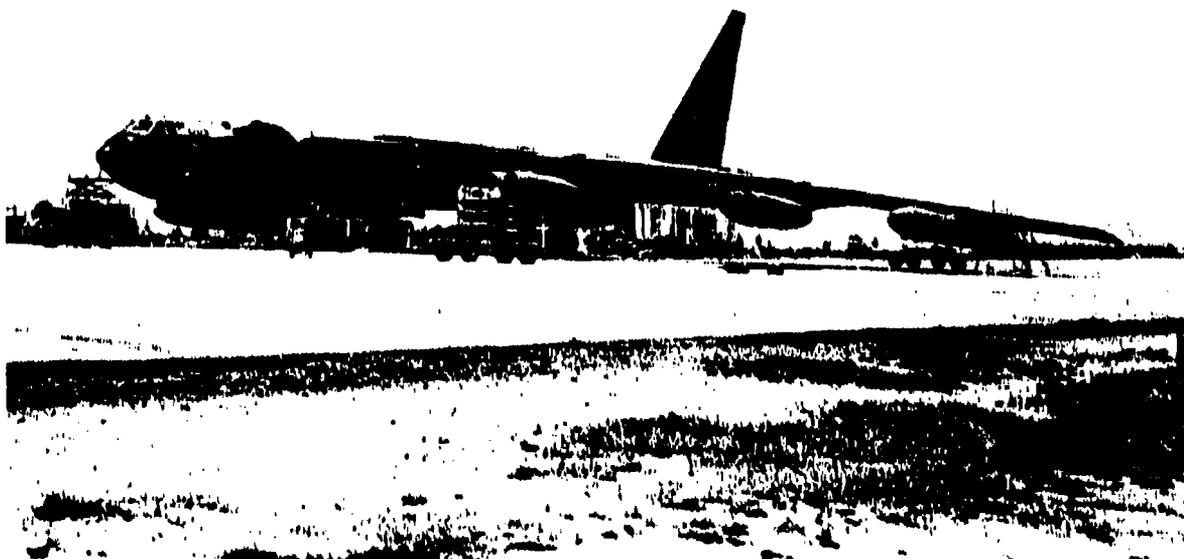


CPT Richard "Steve" Ritchie, the first 1/5AF ace of the Vietnam war.

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A B-52 receives a portion of its bomb load.

May, 144 SAMs had been fired at B-52s, resulting in two hits in addition to the one loss. This was a ratio of SAMs fired per hit of 48:1 and a ratio of 144 SAMs fired per loss. There were 666 AAA reactions which caused the loss of five USN aircraft. There were also two F-111 aircraft which were lost to unknown causes in RP 1.

(S) The US Navy flew 50 percent of the attack and 60 percent of the support sorties over North Vietnam. The reconnaissance effort decreased during the month by 31 percent.

(S) The decreases mentioned above were partially offset by a significant increase in B-52 sorties over the North to 840. All of these were targeted in RPs 1 through 4 with RP 1 and RP 3 receiving the majority of the strikes. These strikes were directed at truck parks, storage areas, and transshipment points in an effort to interdict the flow of men and materiel to the South.

LINEBACKER II

(S) December 1972 witnessed an historic shift in the air war over North Vietnam. During the first 18 days of the month a bombing halt was in effect north of the 20th parallel as an adjunct to the peace negotiations; however, this restriction was lifted on 18 December. The overall level of TAC-AIR sorties flown in the North decreased 11 percent from November. USN sorties dropped by 24

percent. This was partially due to the bombing restrictions; however, USAF TACAIR sorties showed a two percent increase due to an increase in combat support sorties as part of the special campaign, discussed below, known as LINEBACKER II. USAF attack sorties for North Vietnam actually decreased by four percent for the month. The strike and armed reconnaissance effort dropped a substantial 18 percent from November. By far the most significant event of December in the air war over North Vietnam was the 12 day campaign directed against North Vietnam from 18 through 29 December, which was given the code name LINEBACKER II.

(S) One unique aspect of this campaign was the fact that nearly all sorties in this campaign were flown in RPs 5 and 6. A second was that 46 percent of the strike sorties in LINEBACKER II were flown by B-52 bombers. This intensification of air operations resulted in extensive damage to enemy installations. There were three distinct phases to LINEBACKER II operations. Phase 1 (18 to 20 December) was characterized by a total of 315 B-52 night sorties directed against 11 target complexes in the Hanoi area. The giant bombers struck in three waves each night, preceded by support aircraft including CAP/ESCORT, SAM suppression aircraft, and chaff dispensing aircraft. Phase II (21 to 24 December) saw somewhat of a reduction in the sortie rate with 120 sorties being directed against six

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targets. There was also a shift in the areas targeted. On the 5th night (22 December) Haiphong was the target, and on the 6th and 7th nights Long Dun Kep, Thai Nguyen, and six SAM sites constituted the targets. Only one wave per night of B-52s was utilized and the support package was modified to provide more F-4E aircraft with CBU for use in SAM suppression. Phase III of the operation saw 300 sorties directed at 18 target complexes and five SAM sites. Tactics were slightly modified in that while only one wave was used per night, each wave included more sorties. On 26 December 120 B-52 sorties were contained in one wave and struck seven targets simultaneously. Seventy-two of these struck the Hanoi area, 30 the Haiphong area and 18 Thai Nguyen. On 27 December the Hanoi area was struck with 30 sorties, nine of which were targeted against SAM sites. The last two days of the B-52 effort saw most sorties directed against the Lang Dang railroad yard and two separate SAM support facilities.

(S) During the entire LINEBACKER II operation B-52 sorties all struck at night. Also operating at night were F-111s and USN TACAIR strikes providing diversionary attacks and SAM suppression. The daylight TACAIR effort was mostly sustained by A-7s and F-4s bombing visually or with LORAN techniques, depending upon the weather over the target.

(S) Naturally, the enemy also responded vigorously to LINEBACKER II. The total number of SAMs fired during the 12 day offensive was greater than during any previous month since the SAM made its appearance in the theater. The expected heavy MIG concentration never did materialize. There were 27 MIG reactions during the month, only one of which was not associated with LINEBACKER II operations. All of the reactions were by MIG 21 aircraft. Two factors which contributed to this comparatively low level MIG effort were intensive jamming activities directed against enemy ground controlled intercept facilities plus numerous strikes against airfields early in the operation. Most MIG reactions were at night and 40 percent were by a single MIG. There were some instances noted of simultaneous engagement of US aircraft by both SAMs and MIGs on the periphery of the high threat areas. No B-52s were downed by MIGs. Three US planes were lost to daytime MIG activities, two USAF F-4s and a USN RA-5. On the other hand, five MIGs were downed in air to air combat. Two of these fell to USAF F-4s (one day and one at night) and one to a USN F-4J (daylight). The two remaining MIG losses were credited to B-52 tailgunners.

(S) Enemy AAA fire accounted for three US aircraft, two USN aircraft (one A-7 and one A-6)

and one Marine F-4. There were four US aircraft lost due to unknown causes over North Vietnam during December; two USAF F-111s, one USAF F-4, and one USMC A-6.

(S) By far the most prevalent threat to US aircraft during LINEBACKER II was the SAM reaction. A total of 1,321 SAMs were launched at American warplanes over North Vietnam, all but 71 of which were directed to counter LINEBACKER II operations. B-52s attracted 1,032 SAMs. The enemy downed 15 B-52s with SAMs resulting in a ratio of SAMs fired/B-52s downed of 68.8 to 1 for December. TACAIR fared better with a 96.3 to 1 SAM fired/aircraft lost ratio. There were three losses by TACAIR to SAMs. All of the B-52 losses were within ten miles of Hanoi. See Figure B-5 for enemy air order of battle.

(S) Targeting for LINEBACKER II included railyards, shipyards, command and control facilities, warehouses and transshipment points, communications facilities, vehicle repair facilities, power plants, railway bridges, railroad rolling stock, truck parks, MIG bases, air defense radars, and SAM and AAA sites. Preliminary bomb damage assessment (BDA) indicated that the enemy received very heavy damage.²¹ More tangible evidence was observed in the enemy's difficulty in radio broadcasting and other military and civilian communications. Especially crippled was the long distance communications capability.

(S) January 1973 saw a cessation of all US offensive operations and tactical reconnaissance on the 15th. Prior to that date, the level of operations had declined appreciably from December. Overall, the majority of the effort in January over the North was supplied by the USN. The attack sorties of the USN decreased, but the support sorties nearly doubled. Both the USAF and USMC efforts declined sharply, producing an overall 52 percent decrease for the month of January in total sorties over North Vietnam. There were 535 B-52 sorties over the North, down from 1,353 in December. The vast majority of the effort was directed against RP 1 and RP 2. No sorties were flown in RP 5 or RP 6. One MIG 21 and one MIG 17 were downed during the month. No US aircraft were lost over North Vietnam to MIGs; however, one B-52 and one USN A-6 were lost to SAMs and one USN F-4 was lost to AAA.²²

Enemy Air Defense Threat

(S) The North Vietnamese SAM order of battle on 31 March 1972 consisted of a total of 35 operational SAM sites and 4 confirmed operating areas (COA). Of these, 18 sites were in Route Pack 6 to provide defense for the Hanoi-Haiphong area.

(S) The AAA threat picture at the start of the offensive on 31 March was uncertain as the US

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had not been flying over Route Packs 5 and 6 for photo reconnaissance with any regularity and did not have the added advantage of aircrew reports. The threat picture was possibly heavier than what is described here. Basically, AAA defended the industrial, strategic, and populated areas with calibers up to 100mm. Most of the information on AAA deployment was based on photo reconnaissance that in some cases dated as far back as 1968. Very few high threat areas (HTA) were established for small caliber AAA. This was primarily due to the inadequate photographic data.

(S/NF) on 31 March 1972 the North Vietnamese fighter inventory consisted of approximately 93 MIG-21s, 38 MIG-19s, and 120 MIG-15/17s, for a total of 246 aircraft. This figure, however, could lead to an exaggerated picture of what the North had in terms of effective aircraft. By subtracting the aircraft in storage, the US estimated that they had a total of no more than 190 in-commission aircraft.

(S) Prior to the offensive the North Vietnamese surface-to-air missile order of battle (SAMOB) carried an average of 37 operational SAM sites and 5 COAs. In RPs 5 and 6 the main concentration of operational SAM sites was in and immediately around the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong. The SAMOB in this area averaged 18 operational SAM sites. There was very little change in the deployment of SAM sites during the month of April; however, in May, the North increased the number of operational sites in RPs 5 and 6 to an average of 24 sites. The general trend of deployment of the additional sites was towards the north and northwest in an apparent effort to provide coverage for the Kep and Yen Bai airfields as well as the northwest rail line and highway networks. The trend during the remainder of the offensive was to increase SAM coverage in RP 6 to encompass a larger area and include the northeast rail lines. Although the average number of operational sites decreased from 24 during the month of May to 18 sites and 3 COAs as of 23 October, the North provided maximum coverage in RP 6 by deploying the sites away from the center of the Hanoi-Haiphong areas, resulting in less dense coverage, but including a much greater area.

(S/NF) Both photography and aircrew firing reports were used to identify the AAA threat. Significantly, there were more small caliber AAA HTAs established after the initiation of LINEBACKER I than for the beginning of the offensive, due to the combined advantage of aircrew reports and increased photo reconnaissances at lower altitudes. The trend witnessed since 31 March was an increased use of small caliber AAA (up to 57mm) and the widespread deployment of 23mm guns. One very significant development in the AAA threat was the

introduction of the ZSU-23-4 self-propelled AAA system into North Vietnam. The ZSU-23-4 was a four-barrelled 23mm weapon with the gun dish radar providing on-board fire control. This radar operated in the J-band and was not detectable on the majority of radar homing and warning (RHAW) equipment employed in Southeast Asia. Initial reconnaissance of 18 July confirmed two ZSU-23-4s near the Phuc Yen airfield, and on 14 September intercept of a gun dish radar was confirmed for the first time in the vicinity of Hanoi.

(S/NF) By 23 October, the combined results of US air-to-air and air-to-ground activity had reduced the enemy inventory to approximately 132 in-commission aircraft (40 downed by USAF crews, 21 by USN/USMC crews, and 14 lost to other causes).

(S) The North launched 2,701 surface-to-air missiles during LINEBACKER I operations, which resulted in the downing of 35 allied aircraft and 41 aircraft damaged. In RPs 5 and 6, SAMs accounted for 24 aircraft downed and 23 damaged.

(S/NF) During the early stages of the offensive SAMs were launched in barrage at 6 second intervals until a total of six were launched. Later, this number was cut back to three, and finally, to two SAMs at six second intervals. These tactics were normally used against all types of aircraft, regardless of aircraft mission.

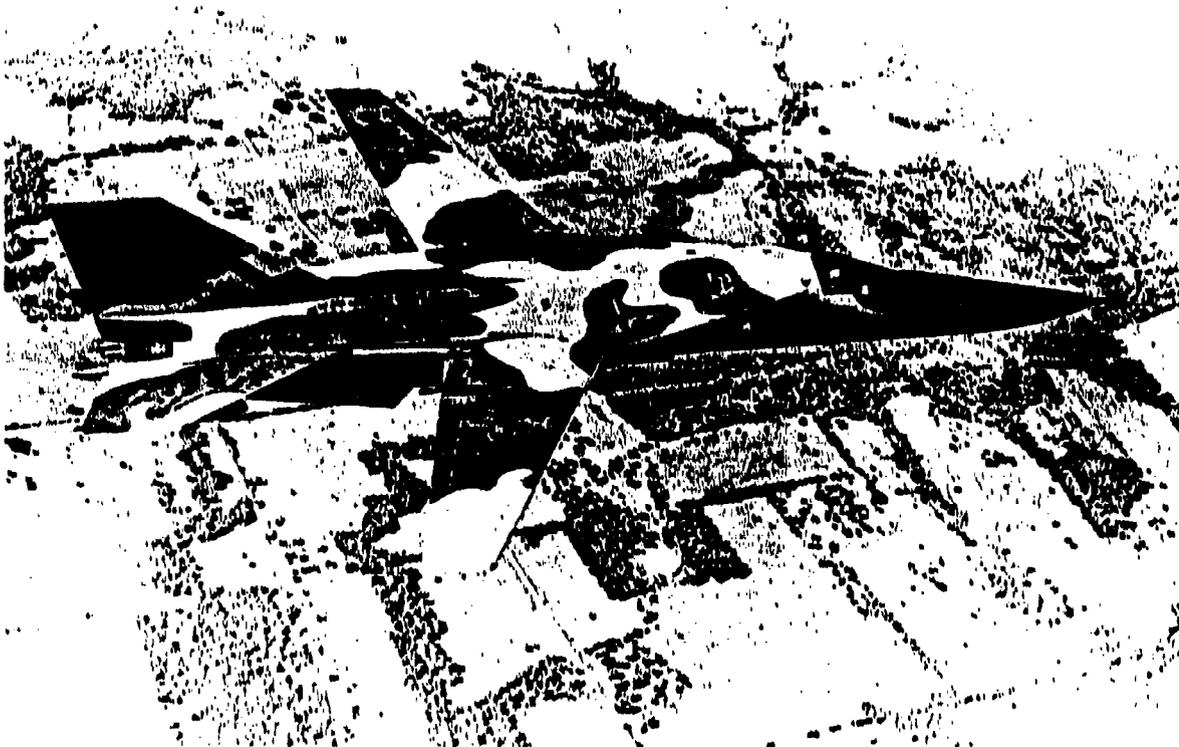
(S/NF) The North Vietnamese employed a variety of methods to degrade the early warning capability of RHAW equipment. For example, except for the initial launch indication light, use of the Fansong F optical tracking system provided no target tracking RHAW indication. An added bonus of this system was that it permitted low altitude tracking of the target, down to 300 feet. However, this system was effective only when visibility was fair to good.

(S/NF) The North Vietnamese may also have employed track-on-jam techniques. This technique manually tracked the source of jamming and attempted to guide the missile towards the source. This tactic was not dependent upon visibility and the only RHAW indication to aircrews was a momentary launch light. However, if aircrews followed standard jamming procedures, this tactic did not present a significant threat.

(S/NF) Late in the year encounters in which aircraft were downed or narrowly missed were usually associated with short launch warnings, which indicated that the guidance signal was being delayed. Employing this technique, the enemy simply kept the guidance signal off until after booster separation and provided total radar pulse (RP) suppression for 6 seconds. This tactic was especially effective.

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The F-111 swing wing fighter bomber.

tive when used in conjunction with the Fansong F system.

(S/NF) Another tactic used successfully was the high/low launch. Using this technique, one missile was launched on a high, leading trajectory followed by a second missile on a low trajectory. This tactic was effective in that while evading the initial threat, the aircrew might not see the second missile or distinguish a second RHAW indication. This tactic was normally used against low altitude targets and could be used with any of the previously mentioned tactics. This also appeared to be the primary SAM tactic used against F-111s when they were re-introduced into combat late in 1972.

(S) AAA reactions against aircraft other than the F-111 generally involved all calibers, although very few 100mm firings were reported by aircrews. Fire control radars were quite commonly employed in strategic locations and were associated with 57mm or larger AAA weapons. During June and July the North Vietnamese used balloon aerial mines which, in some instances, detonated as our aircraft passed. Seventeen balloon incidents were noted; however, no aircraft were damaged or seriously threatened. This tactic appeared to have been a harassment techni-

que or possibly an attempt at area denial. The balloons were reported in the Hanoi, Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen, and Kep areas.²⁸

(S/NF) Analysis of MIG tactics employed during LINEBACKER 1 revealed that MIG tactics were straight out of Soviet tactics manuals and changed only when the US overcame each of their techniques. The MIG-21 FISHBED was the mainstay of the air defense interceptor force and was usually launched from either Phuc Yen or Hanoi Gia Lam airfields. After scrambling, the MIGs generally proceeded to pre-established holding areas before being vectored towards an engagement. The selection of holding areas appeared to be dependent upon the ingress route of the USAF strike force.

(S/NF) Between two to six MIGs were usually launched after the North Vietnamese air surveillance provided early warning of an ingressing strike. They were usually launched in elements of two and normally fought in these elements. One MIG in the element usually attacked while the other covered. By remaining in an offset trail, the second MIG was able to come in on the US plane's tail after the first MIG overshot and was pursued. A variation was a head-on overflight. When our

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fighter-bombers reversed in pursuit, the second MIG or another flight of MIGs trailing the diversionary flight would then be in a favorable 6 o'clock position. On several occasions two flights of MIGs used a high/low tactic whereby two MIGs would first dive into a formation followed by two additional MIGs attacking from the 6 o'clock low position. At times MIG launches were timed so that their ground-controlled intercept (GCI) vectoring could be run against fuel-limited egressing aircraft.

(S/NF) The one constant that appeared to be common to all the tactics used was that the MIGs engaged only when the pilot or his GCI controller perceived a clear-cut advantage. When the TEA-BALL weapons control system was initiated by the US in early August, much of the enemy's offensive advantage was negated, and the MIG kill to loss ratio improved dramatically.

(S/NF) During the early phases of the F-111 strikes, very little reaction was noted from the North Vietnamese. However, after they gained experience and knowledge of the F-111 operations, they appeared to make only minor adjustments to their defensive tactics. The most effective SAM tactic appeared to be the use of the high/low launch technique discussed earlier. Although no F-111s were known to have been downed by SAMs, crews have reported six near misses out of 15 sightings.

(S) Typical AAA defensive reactions against F-111s operating in RPs 5 and 6 primarily involved the use of small caliber AAA due to both the low altitude and high airspeed at which the F-111 operated. Most of the reactions were from 23mm and 37mm AAA, although reports of 57mm fire were also common. Small caliber AAA offered the

gun crew quicker reaction and had higher practical and cyclic rates of fire, thus increasing the probability of a hit. Additionally, calibers up to 57mm had tracer rounds, which allowed the gunners to correct their fire for more accuracy. Most F-111 aircrews reported that AAA was directed at them as they released their ordnance, or upon the sound of their aircraft. This indicated that the AAA defenses were having difficulty acquiring the F-111s during the hours of darkness. Of interest, AAA activity in RP 1 involved the use of mortar flares fired by the enemy to heights up to 4,000 feet in an apparent effort to illuminate the aircraft.

(S) There were no MIG reactions noted against F-111 missions. This was probably due to the parameters within which the F-111 operated (darkness and high speed, low-level flight).²⁴ See Figure B-5 for enemy AOB. A summary of sorties into North Vietnam is shown in Figure B-6.

AIR OPERATIONS IN THE KHMER REPUBLIC

(TS) Air operations in the Khmer Republic by US forces were governed by a complicated set of rules of engagement. The majority of US activity was within an area referred to as FREEDOM DEAL (Fig. B-7). The US Government, COMUSMACV, and the Government of the Khmer Republic negotiated a rather complicated set of rules of engagement within these areas. In September 1972 authority was extended to operate in the rest of the Khmer Republic in direct support of the Khmer Army (FANK). The vast majority of the US effort was expended within FREEDOM DEAL and for the purpose of interdiction of enemy lines of communication.²⁵

NORTH VIETNAM SORTIE SUMMARY

1972							
MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	
ATTACK SORTIES.....	61	182	132	1,885	5,862	6,310	
TOTAL SORTIES*.....	973	2,182	2,034	4,722	10,982	12,121	
USN ATTACK SORTIES.....	14	34	68	1,250	3,920	4,151	
USAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	47	148	64	628	1,919	2,125	
USMC ATTACK SORTIES.....	0	0	0	7	23	34	
B-52 SORTIES.....	0	0	0	0	1	271	
1972							
MONTH	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 73
ATTACK SORTIES.....	6,403	6,896	6,336	4,989	3,401	3,050	1,629
TOTAL SORTIES*.....	12,879	13,316	13,233	11,368	8,909	7,894	6,731
USN ATTACK SORTIES.....	4,175	4,746	3,937	2,674	1,716	1,383	863
USAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	2,310	2,112	2,297	2,241	1,606	1,548	716
USMC ATTACK SORTIES.....	8	38	102	84	79	119	50
B-52 SORTIES.....	308	572	411	616	846	1,381	535

*Excludes B-52s.

Source: PACAF

Figure: B-6

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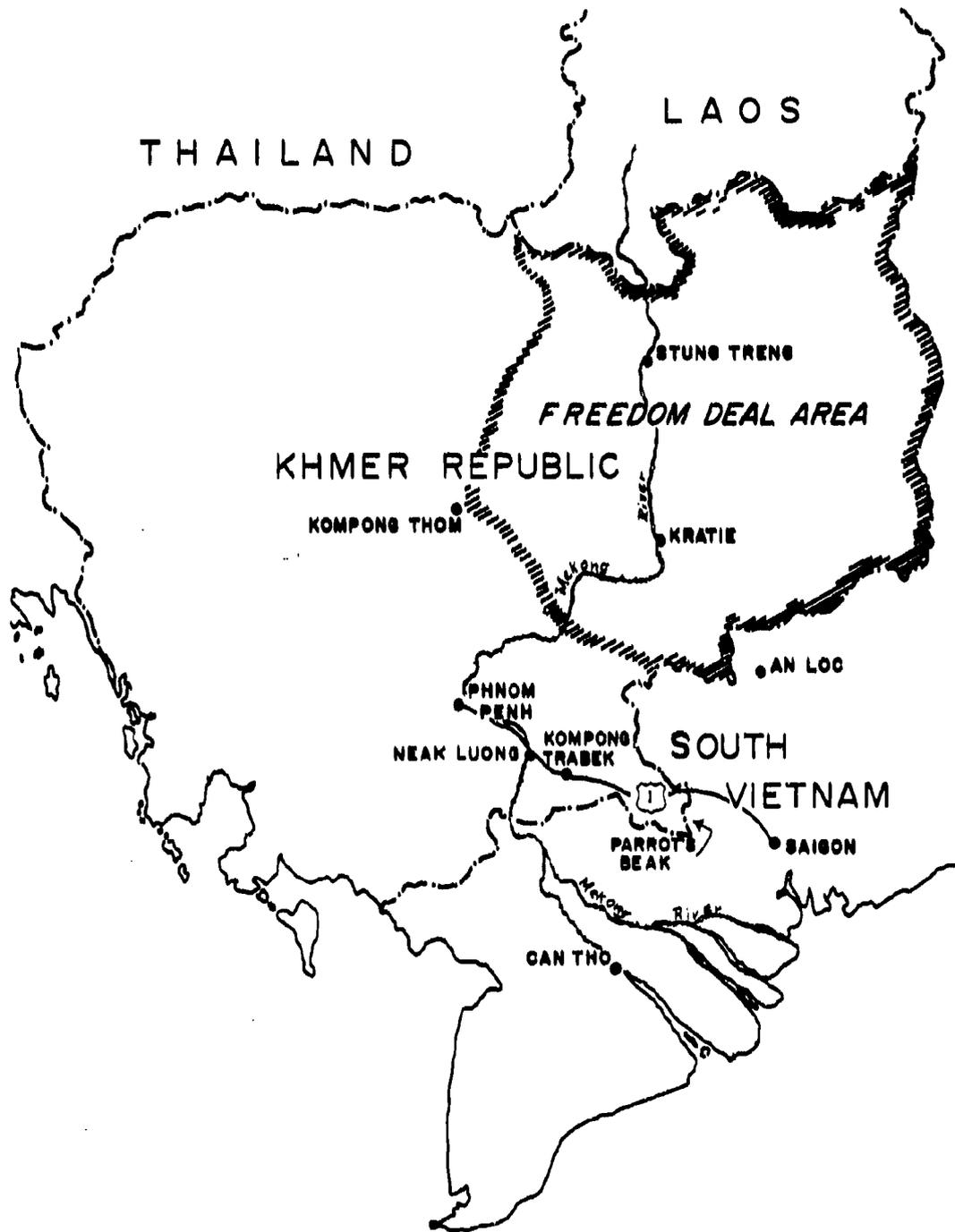
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KHMER REPUBLIC OPERATING AREA



Source: USAF CHECO

Figure: B-7

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(S) During the first half of 1972 air operations in the Khmer Republic were heavily influenced by events taking place in other areas of Southeast Asia. For example, in January ARVN terminated cross-border Operation TOAN THANG, because the troops involved were needed in Vietnam to counter anticipated enemy moves in Tay Ninh Province. Ground activity in the Khmer Republic was the lowest in six months. Air activity decreased by 35 percent in total attack sorties. B-52 sorties were the lowest in four months. This was due to lessened requirements following the withdrawal of ARVN elements. There were no US aircraft lost in the Khmer Republic during January.

(S) In February the total attack sorties increased slightly but the focus was shifted to an interdiction effort directed toward hammering the infiltration routes to South Vietnam. USN aircraft were used in the Khmer Republic for the first time since November 1971. VNAF activity, on the other hand, reflected a drop, since there were fewer RVNAF forces in the area. B-52 sorties increased slightly and were also directed primarily at the enemy's logistics net. One innovation worthy of note was the placing of a Khmer spotter in VNAF AC-119 gunships, which gave much more effective ground control of these strikes. There was one US O-2A downed in the Khmer Republic during February.

(S) In March enemy ground harassment of FANK forces increased. The capital of Phnom Penh was rocketed. Making up for an overall decline in the number of attack sorties, the B-52 raids increased significantly to a six month high. VNAF activity continued to decline. A significant loss to the Khmer Republic occurred when the services of the USN helicopter gunships and the VAL 4 "Black Pony" Squadron ceased operations in protection of ship convoys to Phnom Penh. This protection was then furnished by VNAF TACAIR during daylight and USAF A-37s by night. There were no aircraft lost during March in the Khmer Republic.

(S) The reallocation of resources in response to the NVA offensive in South Vietnam caused air activity to decrease to the lowest point since March of 1970. B-52 sorties dropped from 256 in March to 48 in April. VNAF sorties also decreased. The addition of 313 USN sorties did not overcome the decrease in other areas. There were no US aircraft lost in the Khmer Republic during April.

(S) USAF TACAIR attack sorties dropped an additional 41 percent during May. B-52 sorties were the lowest in over a year, and VNAF sorties declined 65 percent. VNAF did distinguish itself during May by providing outstanding support for the river convoys, using gunships. These were the dark days of the North Vietnamese offensive in South Vietnam, and the Khmer sorties were preempted by higher priority targets.

(S) By June the situation in South Vietnam had stabilized. As US air resources increased and the ground situation in the South improved, 77 percent more sorties were used in the Khmer Republic. A welcome and significant addition was the return of USMC sorties to the Khmer skies. Overall sorties almost doubled, and B-52 sorties went from 22 to 197. There was one aircraft lost in the Khmer Republic in June, that of a forward air controller.

((S) During July a slight decrease occurred in all categories of air activity, while enemy ground activity increased. The Khmers were able to recapture Kompong Trabek.²⁰

(S) During August the enemy seized the initiative from FANK forces within the Khmer Republic. Enemy strategy seemed to be the defense of their critical lines of communication to South Vietnam's Military Region 2, 3, and 4. By using guerilla operations against FANK communications and simultaneously applying pressure in widely dispersed areas, the enemy was able to prevent the concentration of forces necessary to launch offensive operations. Pressure was applied heavily against Route 1 and the lines of communication to Phnom Penh and the area around Kompong Trabek. The appearance of enemy T-54 and PT-76 tanks in the area for the first time reflected the enemy's new determination. While the armor somewhat increased the enemy capability, it also made them more vulnerable to air attack.

(S) The increased activity was also reflected in a 71 percent increase in USAF TACAIR sorties and a 46 percent increase in B-52 strikes. VNAF air sorties also increased 27 percent during the month with the bulk of the effort being applied in support of FANK/ARVN operations on Route 1. The USMC contributed 211 attack sorties during August, which more than doubled their effort from the previous month.

(S) Convoys to Phnom Penh were escorted exclusively by VNAF assets. The initial plans for constant daylight coverage by VNAF light helicopter teams proved to be beyond VNAF capabilities, especially in light of the level of activity in South Vietnam. Instead, VNAF kept eight A-37s on ground alert to respond to convoy calls. After three hours these assets were released for other uses as required if they were not needed for daylight convoy operations. Control of these assets, when used for convoy attack reaction, was exercised by one of three U-17 aircraft which flew cover over the convoy and acted as a forward air controller. Night coverage was provided by two VNAF C-119G gunships augmented, when required, by one helicopter light fire team (consisting of two helicopter gunships and one command and control helicopter) which was kept on ground alert at Neak Luong,

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located about half way between the border with South Vietnam and Phnom Penh.

(S) September witnessed an intensification of the effort and increased enemy success, especially among the Khmer Communist (KC) units. The enemy continued the strategy of applying major pressure at several points to prevent concentration of FANK forces. Indeed, the strategy seemed to be succeeding. The war saw a decrease in TACAIR activity (51 percent) and at the same time a 64 percent rise in B-52 activity with 297 strikes. Most of the B-52 raids were targeted on enemy lines of communication, storage areas, and troop concentrations. It was quite difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of air bombardment, however, since FANK forces were not trained for accurate BDA.²⁷

(S) In October military activity increased sharply, reflecting the most widespread operations since late 1971. The enemy launched a concerted drive to interdict supply routes and isolate Phnom Penh and other urban population centers. Sapper tactics were also used with the ultimate objective being to topple the Lon Nol government by causing popular uprisings. To counter this threat ARVN forces moved into the Parrot's Beak area, bringing their own air support. The relative lull in South Vietnam's Military Regions 2 and 3 also contributed. Consequently, VNAF sorties increased 96 percent over the previous month. The combined USAF and VNAF attack sorties rose only five percent, however, as the USAF attack sorties declined by 48 percent, primarily as a result of the deactivation of the A-37 squadron formerly stationed at Bien Hoa AB. USMC sorties remained at essentially the same level. B-52 activity decreased by 80 percent, dropping from 297 to 215. Sortie activity by the Khmer Air Force (AAK) T-28 fleet showed a 60 percent increase during the month.

(S) Toward the end of the month the intensity of military operations increased still further as rumors of a possible cease-fire caused both sides to jockey for position.

(S) During November 1972 FANK forces devoted most of their efforts to breaking enemy strongholds and trying to reopen vital lines of communication which the enemy had earlier cut. With increased air support FANK troops had considerable success in reopening three major routes. Enemy activity continued to concentrate on the preservation of lines of communication and rear sanctuary areas in Laos. The Khmer Communists continued to harass government forces by cutting lines of communication to Phnom Penh. US TACAIR increased slightly (from 185 to 218), mostly directed by US forward air controllers. VNAF activity plunged to an all time low, declining from 381 sorties in October to 20 in November. This reduction was attributed to

a shortage of pilots. The tremendous increase in VNAF assets caused by the execution of ENHANCE PLUS (an accelerated logistics turnover) necessitated that VNAF withdraw large numbers of pilots from combat for transition training into new aircraft types. US Marine activity decreased from 224 sorties to 126 in November.

(S) The month of December witnessed a general decrease in military activity, even though both sides initiated offensives during the month. The overall level of military activity was the lowest in three months. B-52 activity dropped sharply (from 163 to 48 sorties) from the previous month. This decrease was mostly due to the diversion of B-52 resources to the stepped up attack on North Vietnam. TACAIR activity in the Khmer Republic increased by 44 percent. The majority of the USAF activity was A-7 sorties. USMC A-4 sorties from Bien Hoa accounted for nearly all of the Marine Corps' effort in Cambodia, which reflected a 24 percent increase for December.

(S) The renewal of peace negotiations in January 1973 led to an increase in enemy activity in anticipation of a cease-fire. NVA/VC activity was directed toward South Vietnam, with several NVA units leaving the Khmer Republic and crossing into South Vietnam. Khmer Communist activity increased, and the war became more of a struggle between FANK and the KC. During January TACAIR and B-52 activity rose significantly from 696 to 1,057 sorties. USAF sorties reflected a slight increase, but the greatest part of the increase was accounted for by a 119 percent increase in the USMC effort and a 270 percent increase in the USN effort within the Khmer Republic. B-52 sorties also increased from 48 in December to 189 in January. On 29 January the Lon Nol government unilaterally announced a halt in FANK military activity. US sorties ceased at that time; however, in early February increased enemy activity forced a renewal of operations and US air was used in support of FANK by request of the Khmer government.²⁸ A summary of air operations in the Khmer Republic for January 1972 through January 1973 is shown in Figure B-8.

AIR OPERATIONS OVER LAOS

(S/NF) Pilots operating in Laotian airspace faced a very complicated situation with respect to rules of engagement (ROE). Laos was divided into five major zones, each of which has its own set of ROE. The logic of the divisions (Fig. B-8) was dictated by geography and political sensitivity. The first division made was to separate the Laotian panhandle from the main part. The area within the panhandle was known as STEEL TIGER. The remainder of Laos was known as BARREL ROLL.

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KHMER SORTIE SUMMARY

1972

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
TOTAL SORTIES.....	3,591	4,097	3,333	1,711	989	1,880
ATTACK SORTIES.....	1,480	1,758	1,814	911	417	1,181
USAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	785	943	871	406	239	445
USN ATTACK SORTIES.....	6	107	16	83	16	44
USMC ATTACK SORTIES.....	0	0	0	0	4	106
VNAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	560	468	671	374	181	390
B-12 ATTACK SORTIES.....	109	180	256	48	27	196

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MONTH	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 73
TOTAL SORTIES.....	1,399	2,019	1,395	1,204	770	742	1,057
ATTACK SORTIES.....	1,013	1,751	1,158	1,011	539	579	870
USAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	415	888	327	400	381	223	283
USN ATTACK SORTIES.....	2	4	8	6	6	24	89
USMC ATTACK SORTIES.....	85	211	106	224	120	156	342
VNAF ATTACK SORTIES.....	353	1,298	194	381	20	130	156
B-12 ATTACK SORTIES.....	148	190	297	215	168	8	189

Source: SEADAB

Figure: B-8

STEEL TIGER EAST was the site of main infiltration routes into South Vietnam. STEEL TIGER WEST, on the other hand, bordered friendly Thailand and required different ROE. There were also more populated areas within STEEL TIGER WEST. In the BARREL ROLL area, the northern segment, bordering the People's Republic of China and the northernmost part of North Vietnam, was of obvious political sensitivity. The possible ramifications of an incident in this area required extremely restrictive ROE. Until the invasion of the South by the North Vietnamese, the border area with the Hanoi regime was also politically sensitive. BARREL ROLL WEST bordered Thailand. To further complicate the problem there were special operating areas within the main subdivisions.

(TS) According to the sensitivity of the area, appropriate clearances were required before strikes were authorized. In the case of BARREL ROLL WEST the JCS and the US Ambassador to Laos had to concur even in the return of hostile fire. In other areas forward air controllers, often with a Laotian officer or forward air guides aboard, were required to control ordnance expenditure. In areas virtually unpopulated, save for the enemy, the rules were much less rigid.

(S) Weather patterns were also highly influential in the conduct of operations in these areas. The greatest activity occurred during the dry season (roughly November to April). During much of the remainder of the year roads were impassable. Therefore, the dry season was marked by surges of activity, when the enemy greatly increased logistical and infiltration activities. This would be accompanied by a step up in enemy ground activity,

usually in the form of seasonal offensive in the Plain of Jars area. Weather also accounted for seasonal fluctuations in air campaigns, such as the series of interdiction operations known as COM-MANDO HUNT.¹⁰

(S) After a 31 percent increase in January, air activity in Laos decreased in the four subsequent months until the month of June saw the lowest level of activity since 1965. July activity continued at this low level.

(S) Enemy antiair measures increased considerably in January as MIG and SAM activity also increased. This more than offset a slight decrease in AAA reactions. The result was a shift of targeting with more emphasis placed on the destruction of AAA defense targets and lines of communication. After two US aircraft were downed in January, the AAA threat decreased somewhat in February but remained a matter of grave concern for the gunships. Only one aircraft was lost in February but in March ten were lost, which represented the most aircraft lost in this area since April 1970. AC-130 aircraft were restricted from the Tchepone area in STEEL TIGER as a result of enemy SAM and AAA activity.

(S) March saw an increase in TACAIR activity even though the weather was appreciably worse than the previous month. GEN Vang Pao's defense of his headquarters on the Plain of Jars required close air support as did ground offensives conducted in both BARREL ROLL and STEEL TIGER. The purpose of the latter was to further disrupt enemy supply lines. In fact, during March, sensor detected vehicle traffic did decrease.

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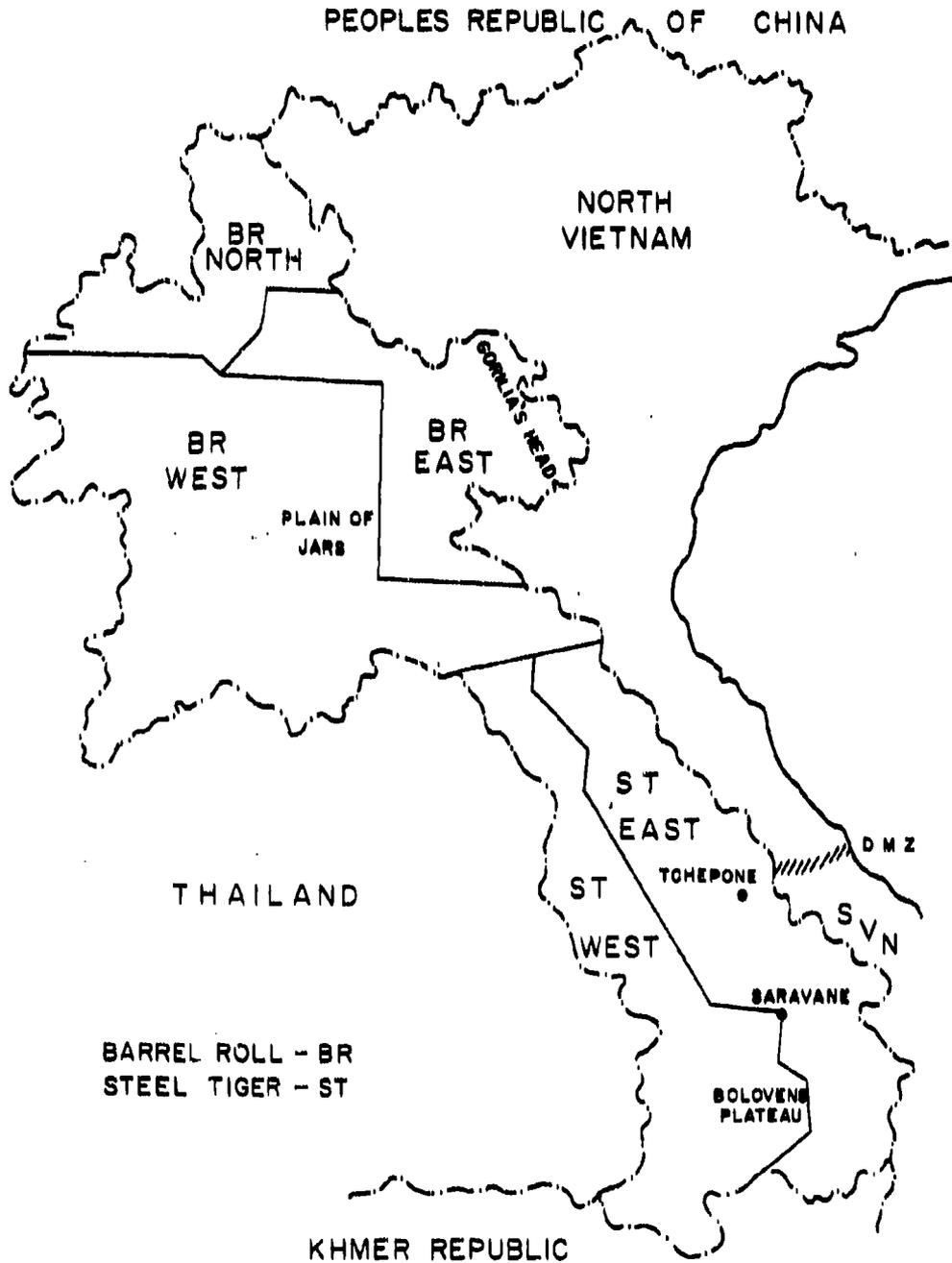
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LAOS OPERATING AREAS



Source: USAF CHECO

Figure: B-9

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(S) During April a sharp decrease in air activity occurred due to several factors. The monsoon rains made ground movement well nigh impossible and thus decreased the need for air support and also cut back the necessity for interdicting lines of communication. However, the diverting of resources to meet the NVA offensive in South Vietnam was perhaps the biggest factor in the decline. Two aircraft were lost in Laos in April.

(S) During May ground activity decreased even further, thus reducing air support requirements. The enemy went on the defensive, being content merely to keep ground pressure away from its lines of communication. Once again, however, it was the diverting of aircraft to counter the offensive in South Vietnam which had the greatest influence on the reduction of air activities.

(S) In June air activity declined to the lowest level since 1965 in Laos as higher priorities elsewhere in SEA consumed nearly all air assets. The weather continued to virtually immobilize ground forces. July continued this trend, interrupted by a slight flurry of activity in support of a friendly offensive in the Plain of Jars, which was repulsed.⁸⁰

(S) During August ground activity in Laos remained at low level as GEN Vang Pao's offensive in the BARREL ROLL area bogged down due to enemy resistance and a lack of air support. The enemy pushed back but was unwilling to further extend his supply lines. There was a slight increase in air support even though two tropical storm systems transited the area, resulting in marginal operating conditions in the STEEL TIGER area for approximately two-thirds of the month. Nevertheless, US attack sorties increased, with the majority being applied in the BARREL ROLL area. The daily average attack sortie rate decreased from 6 in July to 4 in August in STEEL TIGER but increased from one to six per day in BARREL ROLL. The majority of sorties were in support of troops. The enemy was content to hold the ground he had, which left him in good position for any possible dry season offensive plans.

(S) The month of September saw improvement in the weather, but ground activity remained light as GEN Vang Pao's offensive made some progress. Some of this success may be attributed to a considerable increase in air support as the total attack sorties more than doubled. USAF attack sorties increased by 220 and USN/USMC assets contributed 44 additional sorties. This was the first use of Navy and Marine aircraft in BARREL ROLL since 1970. Eighty-seven percent of the total sorties were in the BARREL ROLL area, as the daily average there climbed from six to sixteen attack sorties. US losses, unfortunately, also increased, as three US aircraft were lost. STEEL TIGER sorties

continued to decline in number, and the daily average attack sorties dropped to two. B-52 sorties increased from 20 to 123 with most targets parts of the logistical system in eastern STEEL TIGER.⁸¹

(S) Air activity in the Laotian skies during October marked a significant departure from the norm. In past years during this month preparations got underway for the annual COMMANDO HUNT interdiction campaign in response to the dry season buildup of enemy logistics activity, which did not materialize in 1972.

(S) Total US attack sorties increased somewhat during October with 884 missions flown as opposed to 586 during the previous month. USAF attack sorties actually declined slightly (from 540 to 466); however, USMC sorties increased from 38 to 231 and more than offset the loss. B-52 sorties, which are included in the above totals, also increased, from 20 to 219. RCAF activity jumped sharply, rising from 2,270 sorties in September to 3,386 in October. The increase in air activity occurred in spite of a period of cloudiness caused by the effects of tropical storm Lorna during early October. Probably a more significant factor in the increase was a greater availability of sorties due to restrictions placed on operations over North Vietnam.

(S) Within Laos most of the activity was in the BARREL ROLL area with 540 attack sorties. Also, 129 B-52 sorties were flown in BARREL ROLL mostly against truck parks and storage areas. Most of the TACAIR strikes were in close support of operations on the Plain of Jars and Bolovens Plateau area, with the remainder interdiction or armed reconnaissance missions.

(S) The month of October saw the first use of the A-7 and F-111 aircraft in STEEL TIGER. The A-7 was used in close support, whereas the F-111 was used to fly armed reconnaissance.

(S) During November total sorties increased significantly, from 884 to 1,808; however, total sorties of all services declined slightly, from 10,625 to 9,991. Attack sorties in both BARREL ROLL and STEEL TIGER increased by 300 percent and 45 percent respectively. The USAF flew 71 percent of the sorties within Laos (1,388) and the USN and USMC six percent (81) and 23 percent (175) respectively. In spite of the fact that enemy activity increased during the dry season, the added close air support enabled significant gains on the ground by friendly troops.

(S) In BARREL ROLL, USAF attack sorties climbed from 307 to 610 with most of the increase due to the use of F-111 fighters in BARREL ROLL for the first time, accounting for 455 of the sorties. Heavy use was made of the ground beacon tactic, whereby ground supplied range and bearing to the target were entered into the fire control system

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with the beacon serving as a pivotal offset aim point.

(S) In STEEL TIGER attack sorties nearly tripled, with the increased support backing friendly offensive operations. The USAF supplied 728 sorties (67 percent) including sorties by the A-7 (127) and F-111 (84), as well as the F-4. USMC activity in STEEL TIGER increased sharply from 37 sorties in October to 274 in November, most of which (234) were in direct support of friendly operations. One USMC F-4 was downed, marking the first marine aircraft lost there since the USMC resumed operations in Laos.³²

(S) The month of December saw a slight upturn in total sortie count in Laos. This was partly due to better weather in the target area in spite of two typhoons which swept through the region. The USMC sortie count dropped slightly but this was more than offset by an increase in USAF sorties, especially in the BARREL ROLL area. Over 500 sorties in BARREL ROLL were flown by F-111 aircraft using ground beacons to obtain offset positions. B-52 sorties dropped from 150 to 92 as assets were diverted to the higher priority LINEBACKER II campaign.

(S) As in other areas, the improvement in the status of the peace negotiations in Paris led to a spurt of military activity by both sides. Each wanted to be in the most favorable position should a cease-fire occur.

(S) Enemy logistical activity also increased as

the enemy, in early January, hastened to introduce as many supplies as possible through Laos into South Vietnam prior to the cease-fire effective date. Attempts to stop this supply flow and the generally increased military activity accounted for the 58 percent increase in total sorties in Laos for January. The enemy also significantly bolstered its air defense capabilities. There were sixteen areas in Laos identified as high threat areas and at least five NVA AAA regiments were operating in Laos. There were indications that the enemy was installing SA-2 missile sites in the Tchepone and Saravane areas.³³

(S) Basically, the above activities in Laos could be subdivided into three main types: TACAIR, B-52s, and fixed wing gunships. TACAIR was used with an airborne forward air controller (FAC) when employed in close support of troops. The FAC identified and marked the targets which were usually passed to him from the ground commander. Examples were troops in the open, tanks, guns, mortars, and enemy staging areas. When weather prevented visual target acquisition, long range navigation (LORAN) or radar deliveries on targets sufficiently distant from friendly positions was used. In those areas where a MIG threat existed, the tactical aircraft used air to air missiles for protection against MIGs.

(S) Gunships were used in a dual role in Laos involving both close air support and interdiction of the flow of enemy supplies.

LAOS SORTIE SUMMARY

MONTH	1972					
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN
ATTACK SORTIES	13,202	11,448	12,900	5,299	2,486	2,108
TOTAL SORTIES	23,034	20,040	22,814	12,718	9,703	7,493
USN ATTACK SORTIES	2,716	2,563	3,651	710	75	13
USAF ATTACK SORTIES	5,148	4,425	5,644	1,565	740	379
USA HELO ATTACK SORTIES	843	613	264	0	0	0
VNAF ATTACK SORTIES	104	142	111	24	0	0
RLAF ATTACK SORTIES	4,481	3,705	3,236	2,988	2,013	1,714
B-52 SORTIES	671	562	617	68	30	70
USMC ATTACK SORTIES	0	0	0	6	20	2

MONTH	1972						
	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 73
ATTACK SORTIES	1,611	1,051	3,256	4,720	5,097	5,366	8,482
TOTAL SORTIES	6,923	6,895	8,264	10,625	9,991	10,475	14,916
USN ATTACK SORTIES	2	17	12	14	81	114	491
USAF ATTACK SORTIES	208	290	486	602	1,328	1,604	2,073
USA HELO ATTACK SORTIES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
VNAF ATTACK SORTIES	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
RLAF ATTACK SORTIES	1,397	1,651	2,720	3,386	3,327	3,341	4,482
B-52 SORTIES	9	20	123	219	150	82	386
USMC ATTACK SORTIES	4	6	38	208	449	308	536

³²Excludes B-52s

Source: SEADAB

Figure B-10

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(S) B-52 forces were also used for saturation strikes which could either be interdiction or close support of troops in contact. Enemy troop concentrations, bivouacs, and storage areas were prime targets for the giant B-52s.

(S) All strikes within Laos were controlled initially by an airborne command post located aboard a C-130 which then either passed them to a FAC for control or assigned a target for a nonvisual drop.⁸⁴

(S) Another important contribution to the air effort in Laos was the numerous sorties by USA armed helicopters; however, these ended in March.

(S) Total attack sorties were composed of a combination of USAF, USN, USA, VNAF, and RLAf assets. A breakdown is included in Figure B-10.

USAF AIR OPERATIONS

(C) As 1972 began, the USAF in Vietnam was in a dual status. The Commander, 7th Air Force wore two hats in that he also served as the Deputy Commander MACV for Air and as such was respon-

sible to COMUSMACV for the conduct of the air war. Parallel organizations existed in that MACV and 7th Air Force functioned as separate organizations. The Commander of 7th Air Force served as the single manager for air assets in Southeast Asia and was responsible for coordination between the component services and other assets (such as Strategic Air Command aircraft) not under his direct operational control for purposes of target coordination, mission direction control, and establishment of air safety procedures.

(U) In May 1972, 7th Air Force and MACV Headquarters were integrated for operational purposes and colocated. The 7th Air Force commander became the Deputy Commander MACV. This structure continued until 15 February 1978, when the US Support Activities Group (USSAG) was activated at Nakhon Phanom RTAB, Thailand and assumed command of the air war in Southeast Asia. The commander of the 7th Air Force became the USSAG commander.⁸⁵ USAF Air Order of Battle is shown in Figure B-11.

USAF AIR ORDER OF BATTLE

31 Jan 73

SOUTH VIETNAM BASES *

AIRCRAFT TYPE	DA NANG	TAN SON NHUT	TOTAL
EC-47.....	7	0	7
O-2.....	0	38	38
OV-10.....	13	0	13
	<u>20</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>58</u>

* Note: 17 AC-119s at Da Nang on loan from VNAF not shown.

THAILAND BASES **

AIRCRAFT TYPE	KORAT	NAKHON PHANOM	TAKLI	UBON	UDORN	U-TAPAO	TOTAL	SIA GRAND TOTAL
A-7.....	65	0	0	0	0	0	65	65
AC-130.....	0	0	0	13	0	0	13	13
C-130.....	8	21	0	0	0	14	43	43
CH-53.....	0	11	0	0	0	0	11	11
EB-60.....	22	0	0	0	0	0	22	22
EC-121.....	7	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
EC-47.....	0	16	0	5	0	0	21	28
F-4.....	21	0	0	109	91	0	221	221
F-105.....	24	0	0	0	0	0	24	24
F-111.....	0	0	48	0	0	0	48	48
O-2.....	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38
OV-10.....	0	40	0	10	0	0	50	63
RF-4.....	0	0	0	0	21	0	21	21
TOTAL	<u>147</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>540</u>	<u>604</u>

** SAC Aircraft Inventory Not Available

Source: SEADAD

Fig. B-11

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Tactical Air (TACAIR)

(U) One of the most flexible weapons in the US arsenal was tactical air power. Because of its tremendous versatility it was used in many roles in the air war in Southeast Asia. The three main areas of employment were in close support of troops in contact, interdiction, and counterair activity.

(S) As a close support weapon the tactical fighter offered many options to the ground commander. By varying its ordnance it could give the ground commander an optimum target effect. The normal strike procedure, weather and enemy threat permitting, was to use a forward air controller (FAC). These men were specially trained in the control of air strikes. Usually they flew in light propeller-driven aircraft with ability to stay over the target for a long time and with slow speed to enable better visibility of the ground. Altitudes flown varied with the enemy threat. Normally a FAC was utilized in the same area as much as possible to increase his familiarity with the terrain and to enable him to note changes from day to day.⁸⁷

(S) The essential control link for proper utilization of TACAIR in the Republic was the forward air controller (FAC). After he identified a target, the FAC requested air assets from the Direct Air Support Center (DASC), one of which was located in each military region. When the enemy offensive opened, three of the four DASCs in the Republic had been turned over to the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF). At three of the four DASCs a US presence was maintained in the form of a Tactical Air Support Division (TASD) consisting (prior to the offensive) of seven officers and 18 enlisted personnel. Their mission was to coordinate between US forces, FWMAF, and RVNAF. They were also available to give technical advice to VNAF personnel. Their link to ARVN field units was an air liaison officer at corps and division levels. Their function was to offer advice on employment of air resources and to effect liaison with the TASD.

(S) When the offensive began, the number of FACs was increased. Aircraft and FACs were also sent from Thailand to the Republic. At the TASD a USAF colonel was assigned as director and senior liaison officer to the ARVN corps commander. The TASD team was also augmented with TDY personnel. The TASD assumed complete control of all US TACAIR and US FAC activity within its respective military region.

(S) The 7th Air Force Tactical Air Control Center, known as Blue Chip, allocated assets to the TASDs who in turn assigned sorties to the FACs in their region. VNAF assets continued to be controlled by their own DASC and while there was

close liaison, some confusion resulted from this arrangement.⁸⁷

(S) The FAC was responsible to mark the target and ensure, insofar as possible, the safety of friendly forces and noncombatants in the area of the target. When weather or the enemy threat precluded the use of a FAC, the TAC aircraft could use either long range navigation (LORAN), or radar means under ground control. In these latter events, however, the pilot was limited to targets located some distance from friendly forces. Where enemy AAA or SAM threat was high, fighter aircraft were sometimes used to perform the forward air controller function. They were less vulnerable to enemy countermeasures, but the altitude and speeds at which they operated gave less ground visibility, and they had less time over the target.

(S) A major problem that FACs encountered was a result of the enemy's introduction of the Russian SA-7 Strela (NATO designation GRIL) missile in Military Region 1 on 29 April 1972. After its first appearance in South Vietnam in Quang Tri Province the use of the missile also appeared in the vicinities of Dak To, Kontum, and An Loc. During the period 29 April through 30 June 1972 about 175 Strela missiles were launched against US and allied aircraft. Thirteen USAF and eight VNAF aircraft were lost due to Strela firings. This represented an 8:1 kill ratio as compared to about 60:1 for the larger SAM (SA-2) missile. Only one jet aircraft was lost during the period to the Strela system.⁸⁸

(S) In addition to the Strela hazard, the forward air controller encountered other problems which taxed his ingenuity to the utmost. For example, in the battle of An Loc, a very small area of operations existed. The tactical situation dictated that massive air support be furnished to permit the emergency situation on the ground from turning into disaster for friendly forces. The FAC on the scene was confronted simultaneously with coordinating the airspace, controlling strikes, performing visual reconnaissance, and coordinating aerial resupply. He also controlled some VNAF TACAIR and was required to advise aircraft of such safety hazards as AAA and B-52 strikes. He was further required to schedule special mission aircraft such as Cobra, Stinger, and Spectre gunships. Responsibility for following the rules of engagement also fell on the shoulders of the FAC. He had three radio nets to monitor at one time and simultaneously handled as many as ten sets of aircraft above him.

(S) The situation described above indicated the need for a change. The solution arrived at by 7th Air Force was to assign a King FAC, or command and control FAC, who flew above the battle. He was assigned sorties from the Tactical Air Support

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The three primary forward air control aircraft, from top to bottom the O-1, the OV-10, and the O-2.

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Division which he turned over to one of the two FACs who worked below him for actual ordnance expenditure. This freed the King FAC somewhat and greatly facilitated his mastery of the very complex battle picture. Everyone was pleased with the results. As one commander expressed it, the FACs were "leading contenders for the most valuable player award."

(S) The TACAIR fleet performed magnificently during the dark days of the offensive. The veteran A-1E provided the most accurate support with their slower airspeed, but they were also more vulnerable and could not carry the payload of the F-4 Phantoms, whose capacity for armament was prodigious. This large payload led BG J. R. McGiffert III, Deputy Commanding General, Third Regional Assistance Command, to term the F-4 "a tremendous weapon" and most valuable against troop concentrations. However, in McGiffert's opinion the A-37 provided the best compromise between payload and accuracy.

(S) During the An Loc operation two problems emerged. Some planes had a very limited time over target and never expended ordnance. Others got "oumped" by higher priority missions, thus did not get to expend their ordnance. Timing was not always right. The second problem was to get TACAIR refueled, re-armed, and back into the battle as soon as possible. The answer seemed to be a nearby turn around facility, which was established at Bien Hoa AB.³⁹

(S) At Kontum, Quang Tri, and An Loc the verdict was the same. Airpower clearly prevented a South Vietnamese defeat. As the SRAC chief of Staff, COL J. E. Pizzi, neatly summarized: "Undoubtedly, air power played a critically important role. As one looks back one could say that there were many 'ifs' on the battlefield, for example... if it had not been for the TOW missile at a critical point in time, the battle could have been lost. However, one 'if' is a certainty—that if it had not been for US airpower the battle would have been lost."⁴⁰

SAC ADVON

(U) One of the attached elements in the USMACV Headquarters complex in Saigon was SAC ADVON (Strategic Air Command Advanced Echelon), an element of SAC headquarters. The ADVON team was a forward area planning and operations element that worked hand-in-hand with MACV and the 7th AF. It was ADVON's job to work with SAC's 8th Air Force (8AF) at Andersen AFB, Guam to match B-52 bomber and tanker resources in the Western Pacific with the combat requirements of MACV and 7AF. The ADVON Chief served as the personal representative of the Commander-in-Chief, SAC (CINCSAC) in Vietnam.

(U) The mission of ADVON was to be a forward extension of SAC headquarters to provide the MACV and 7AF Commanders with bombing and aerial refueling expertise. ADVON's job was to optimize the use of B-52 and KC-135 aircraft through close coordination with the MACV staff. Their biggest responsibility was to pass target information to 8AF planners on Guam, who in turn monitored all SAC missions over Southeast Asia. The ADVON was organized into major operational divisions: bomber, tanker, intelligence, and administration.

(U) The bomber division assisted in planning B-52 missions after targets were received from the MACV Director of Intelligence. Three bomber teams, made up of four men each, worked around the clock to develop this target information for relay to 8AF where appropriate wing staffs incorporated this data into their overall flight plans. If higher priority targets appeared before the bombers approached their release point, ADVON could direct air target changes to maximize the B-52 effectiveness. The bomber division also monitored each mission for emergencies and bomb damage assessment (BDA) reports.

(U) The ADVON Chief was directly involved in the daily target selection process. Each morning key MACV officers reviewed targets that had been nominated by the military region field commanders. A numerical value was given each target, based on current intelligence and tactical value. The target selection panel evaluated the target list and matched the approved targets with the available B-52 assets. It was a detailed procedure, but one that was required for proper B-52 utilization.

(U) The ADVON tanker division received fuel requirements from 7AF planners, determined refueling altitudes, set rendezvous times, and planned fuel loads to be given each fighter aircraft. The tanker specialists then mated the many fighters with KC-135s in one of several predetermined air refueling areas. Finally, operational orders were sent out to each tanker unit relaying mission orders.

(U) Working with both the bomber and tanker specialists was the intelligence division, which gathered, analyzed, and disseminated current intelligence data not only to ADVON, but to the flying units and SAC headquarters as well. Their primary function was to analyze the enemy threat in the targets and refueling areas. The intelligence division also gathered bomb damage assessment reports and reviewed all strike reconnaissance photography to evaluate B-52 effectiveness.

(U) The remaining organizational element of SAC ADVON was the administration division. This section provided the necessary administrative support for the entire ADVON.⁴¹

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Use of ARC LIGHT Sorties

(C) During 1972 use of the giant B-52 bombers increased sharply. It was proven to be a weapon of tremendous value, combining destructive power with a very tangible psychological effect. Flying at an altitude where it could normally be neither seen nor heard by the enemy on the ground, the first indication of its presence was a series of explosions of almost unbelievable intensity.

(S) The objectives of ARC LIGHT (B-52) bombing were:

—to aid the defense of friendly forces and cities under attack.

—to interdict enemy lines of communication, storage areas, staging facilities, and means of transportation.

—to support friendly ground initiatives.

—to conduct spoiling operations against enemy attacks.

—to attack enemy fixed and semi-fixed facilities.

—to exploit to the fullest the psychological effect of heavy aerial bombardment and destroy the enemy's will to fight.⁴²

(S) During 1972 the B-52 became increasingly important as US forces continued to draw down, and ARVN forces began to carry more and more of the load. As Figure B-12 clearly indicates, the sortie rate shows a steady upward climb, dramatically increasing subsequent to the offensive. The sortie rate in July was almost triple that of January. Total ordnance expended by B-52s rose from 22,000 tons in January to 54,000 tons in July.⁴³

(C) During the height of the enemy offensive the vast majority of the ARC LIGHT strikes were targeted within the Republic of Vietnam with a heavy concentration in three areas: Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces in northern Military Region 1, the Kontum-Dak To area in Military Region 2, and An Loc in Military Region 3. When the battles for these areas were at their critical stages, the B-52s were used in direct support of friendly forces with some strikes as close as 800 meters to friendly forces. In April over 50 percent of the B-52 strikes in-country were directed at the enemy artillery positions and troop concentrations around Kontum City.⁴⁴

(S/NF) The value of the B-52 to the beleaguered garrison at An Loc can best be judged by referring to some comments of observers of the battle. During the course of the battle the enemy introduced the SA-7 missile and also increased the number of antiaircraft artillery pieces. This seriously interfered with the available air support with one exception—the B-52. The B-52 missions dropped tons of bombs on enemy troops as close as 600 to 800 meters from defensive positions. One large enemy force engaging the 81st ARVN Airborne Ranger

Battalion was inflicting heavy casualties until B-52 ordnance hit the enemy force and virtually annihilated it, ending the attack. Often the enemy, fleeing from the ARC LIGHT strike, was a perfect target for the application of conventional artillery and TACAIR strikes.⁴⁵

(S) On the night of 12-13 May the enemy, exploiting extremely bad weather, launched a heavy attack on An Loc supported by armor. From the north and east the enemy poured in direct fire from tanks which were able to operate freely in the absence of TACAIR.⁴⁶ The key factor in stopping the enemy onrush was a total of six B-52 strikes, after which the tanks stopped firing for the rest of the night. Two enemy tanks were destroyed, and an unknown number of enemy were killed.⁴⁷

(S) B-52 sorties were of two types, one in which the B-52 crew did its own navigation to the release point and one in which ground radar (MSQ) vectored the aircraft to the release point. The latter method enabled the B-52s to operate as an all-weather system. The system, named COMBAT SKYSPOT, was also used for combat airlift drops. From five locations the MSQ radars guided the aircraft to the ordnance release point. In the month of June, as an example, 85 percent of the B-52 sorties were controlled by COMBAT SKYSPOT.⁴⁸

(S) Whenever the B-52s flew in close proximity to North Vietnam, or any other high threat area as defined by 7th Air Force intelligence, they were accompanied by search and rescue aircraft and protective air elements. Included in the team of protective air elements were MIG suppression combat air patrols, support aircraft equipped with anti-radar homing missiles, and electronic countermeasures aircraft.⁴⁹

Aerial Refueling

(U) The stepped up air war would not have been possible without air refueling provided by SAC's "flying gas station." The limited range due to heavy bomb loads required fighter aircraft to rely on the KC-135s to provide fueling. Similar to the early model Boeing 707 commercial airliner, the KC-135 could take-off with up to 33,000 gallons of jet fuel, the equivalent of three railroad tank cars. This was enough to replenish four to six F-4s or one B-52 on a normal mission. More aircraft could be serviced if less fuel was required.

(U) A typical fighter mission over North Vietnam required the fighters to link up with a KC-135 enroute to the target area. Weight restriction caused by heavy bomb loads restricted the fighters to internally contained fuel tanks. Because of the high drag configuration of externally carried bombs, they had to replenish their fuel in the air in order to give them the range to strike their targets.

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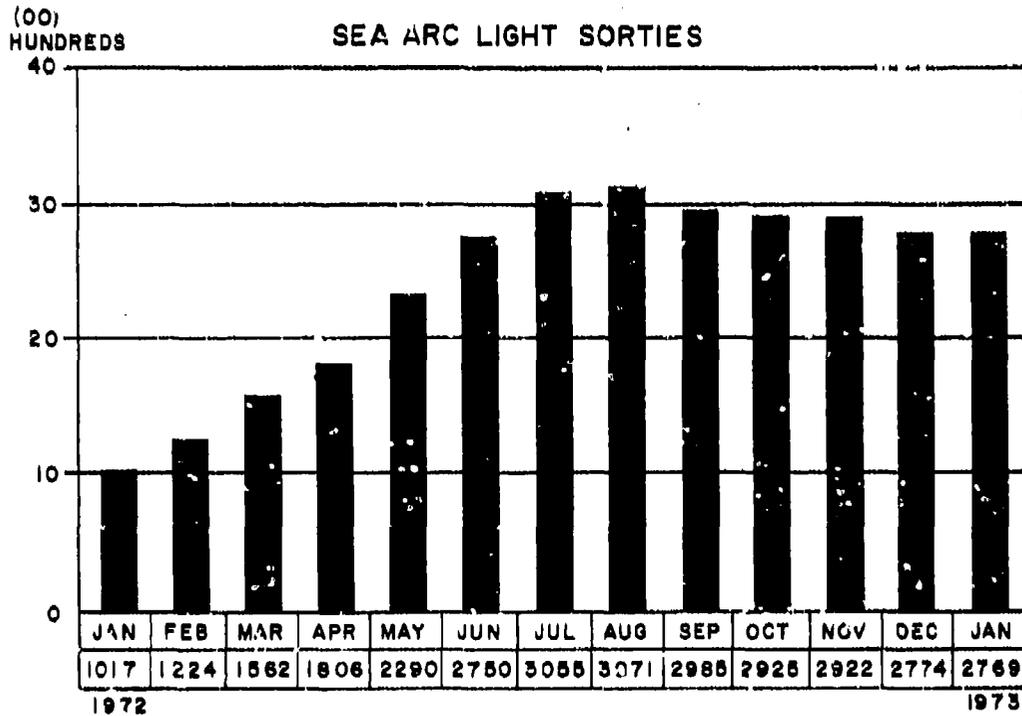
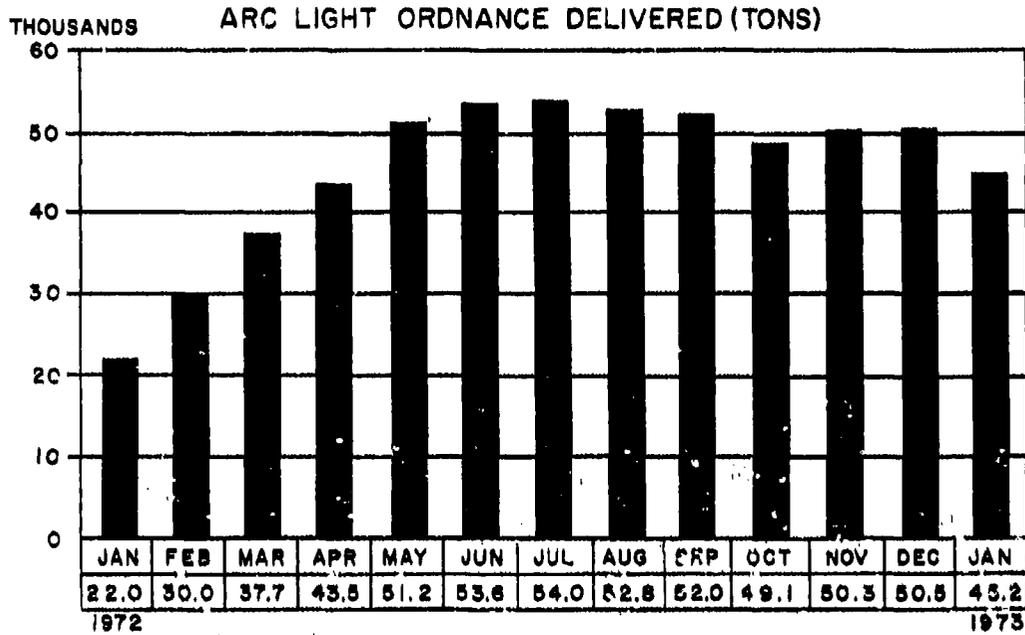
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**KC-135 DATA
SOUTHEAST ASIA 1972**

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	1972 MONTHLY AVERAGE
SAC * DIRECT	SORTIES	79	246	438	667	796	725	682	636	666	800	699	1044	626.0
	AIR REFUEL	114	253	460	702	822	737	669	619	677	627	703	1150	626.9
	FLYING HOURS	412	1118	2068	3040	3484	3116	3056	3016	2714	3367	2912	4686	2748.0
SAC ** INDIRECT	SORTIES	219	218	220	305	381	326	368	529	450	490	331	467	358.9
	AIR REFUEL	8	21	22	23	20	14	16	57	175	167	170	131	66.7
	FLYING HOURS	978	1045	1047	1450	1644	1296	1336	1710	1690	1941	1423	2178	1477.3
FIGHTER SUPPORT	SORTIES	1053	937	1089	1213	1873	2305	2493	2291	2661	1991	1636	1914	1788.0
	AIR REFUEL	6357	5785	6674	6933	9908	11766	10936	10286	11462	8053	8796	9507	8671.9
	FLYING HOURS	4428	3848	4449	5633	8190	7987	7489	11133	13076	9747	7718	9034	7724.9
RADIO RELAY	SORTIES	101	92	97	114	129	116	126	121	120	126	122	126	115.8
	AIR REFUEL	0	0	0	2	6	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	1
	FLYING HOURS	992	938	993	1289	1459	1390	1425	1385	1373	1479	1414	1476	1300.8
	HOURS ORBIT	782	672	766	654	635	597	630	595	690	653	676	676	666.8
PACAF *** INDIRECT	SORTIES	42	10	2	3	1	1	1	4	3	2	4	2	6.3
	AIR REFUEL	258	117	8	18	0	3	4	23	5	1	15	0	37.5
	FLYING HOURS	213	58	5	10	4	6	8	17	44	15	18	7	13284.8
TOTAL ACTIVITY	SORTIES	1494	1503	1840	2325	3180	3473	3870	3581	3902	3408	2792	3553	2894.0
	AIR REFUEL	6737	6178	7182	7878	10756	12620	11629	10988	12319	8848	9684	10788	9606.0
	FLYING HOURS	7023	7002	6580	11422	14781	13765	13314	17261	16066	16569	13483	17351	13284.8
SAC FUEL OFFLOAD—MILLION	4.4	14.4	35.4	55.9	64.5	56.2	51.1	46.7	53.5	50.2	57.5	68.9	46.7	
OTHER FUEL OFFLOAD—MILLION	60.7	54.0	63.6	60.9	77.1	71.6	59.8	91.1	104.7	74.8	76.6	62.9	73.2	
AVERAGE AIRCRAFT POSSESSED	53	58	63	77	110	142	161	164	164	148	135	162	119.8	
AVERAGE CREWS POSSESSED	74	82	91	124	186	241	273	277	277	253	220	258	196.3	
AVERAGE SORTIES PER ACFT	26.2	25.9	29.5	30.2	26.9	24.5	22.8	21.8	23.8	23.0	20.7	21.9	24.2	
AVERAGE SORTIES PER CREW	20.2	18.3	20.3	19.8	17.1	14.4	13.4	12.9	14.1	13.6	12.7	13.8	14.7	

* SAC DIRECT ACTIVITIES ARE PRIMARILY IN SUPPORT OF SAC RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS.

** SAC INDIRECT ACTIVITIES INCLUDE DEPLOYMENT, REDEPLOYMENT, LOGISTICS, FERRY, TEST HOPS AND HIGHER HEADQUARTERS SUPPORT.

*** PACAF INDIRECT ACTIVITIES INCLUDE FIGHTER DEPLOYMENT, REDEPLOYMENT, FERRY AND TRAINING.

NOTES: AIR REFUEL SHOWS THE NUMBER OF SORTIES REFUELED, HOURS SCHEDULED, HOURS FLOWN, AIR REFUEL, AND FUEL OFFLOAD DATA ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR MAY, JUNE, & JULY FOR TAKHLI, DON MUANG & KORAT.

Source: SAC Tanker Monthly Activity Reports

Figure: B-13

(U) Pre-determined refueling tracks allowed the fighter and tanker to rendezvous using a combination of ground and airborne radar. Normal procedure called for two or four fighters to fly together. As they joined up with the "tank," each took his turn on the refueling boom, usually not more than five minutes each. The giant B-52s took about 15 minutes to get a full load. Tankers flew in one of 15 air refueling tracks. ADVON programmed the most efficient use of tankers in a specific time envelope, set altitudes and rendezvous times, and allowed for the amount of fuel to be off-loaded to each aircraft.

(U) In April 1972 during the deployment of additional F-4s to Southeast Asia, tankers again demonstrated their vital role. A squadron of 18 F-4s flying from the west coast of the United States required 12 tankers. These tankers were selected from KC-135 units throughout the Strategic

Air Command, thereby keeping a residual tanker capability to support the continuing daily missions that had to be flown.⁶⁰ A summary of tanker statistics is shown in Figure B-13.

Fixed Wing Gunships

(U) During the majority of the war in Vietnam the enemy regarded the night as his friend and ally. He used stealth and the concealment afforded by the darkness and quickly became the master of the night attack. Much of his movement of supplies and personnel occurred after dark. To meet this challenge the fixed wing gunship was developed and soon became greatly feared by the enemy. Circling patiently overhead, the gunship awaited the enemy presence to unleash its deadly sting.

(S) To pierce the curtain of darkness the gunship had a series of sophisticated sensors and optical devices to augment the eyesight of the crew.

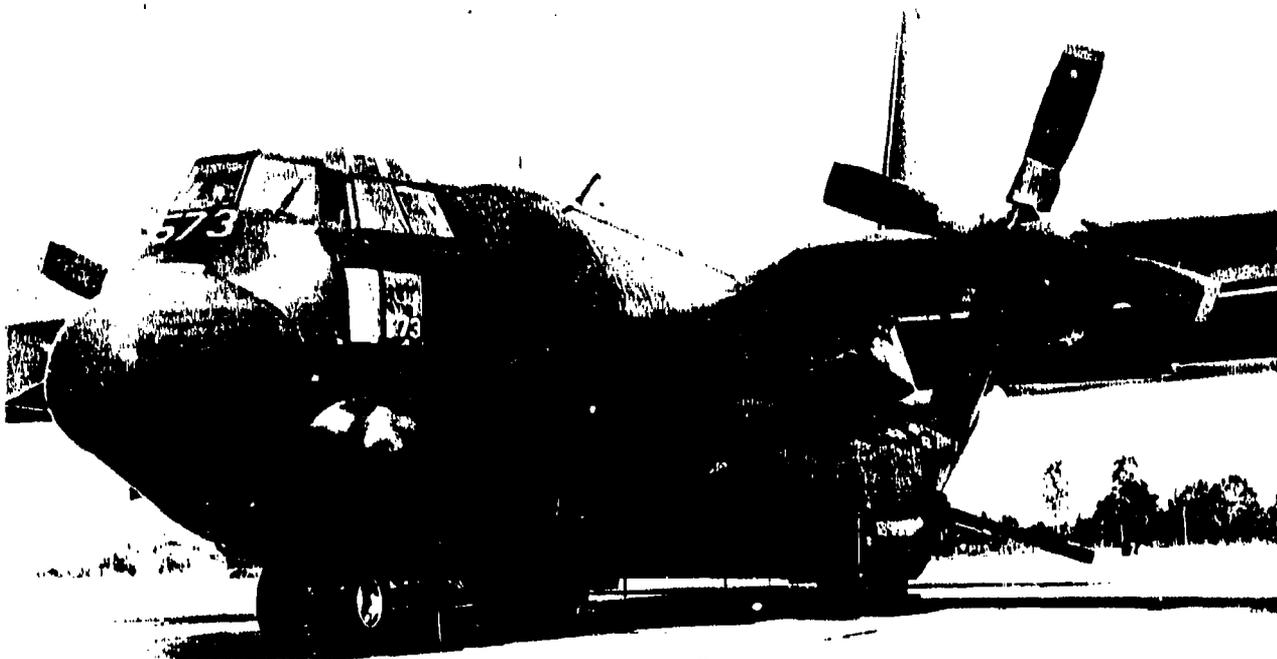
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For example, a low light level television system produced a relatively clear picture of the ground, using available light. This was particularly valuable for the interdiction campaign, as it enabled close patrol of roads, trails, and streams without the necessity of using the 2KW searchlights with which the gunship was also equipped. Another example was the use of infra-red sensors which picked up the contrast between the warm engine, or even the tires, of a vehicle and the cooler surface of the roadbed. If the enemy used radar to search for the gunship, this, too, was detected. There was a special sensor which detected moving targets. Another extremely valuable sensor worked on the principle of detection of electrical interference caused by the ignition system of vehicles. While it was capable of daylight operation and, on occasion was used in this manner, the gunship usually hunted by night, cloaked with the invisibility afforded by the darkness.⁵¹

(S) The gunship mission was twofold, that of armed reconnaissance and that of close air support. Because of its ability to detect and destroy vehicles, the gunship became the deadliest truck killer of all and was used to patrol the Ho Chi Minh trail,

especially during the nights of the northwest monsoon. On a number of occasions a single gunship destroyed or damaged twenty-five trucks on one mission. Prior to the enemy offensive, interdiction was the primary use of the gunship; however, some close air support and base defense work was also done.⁵²

(S) There were two principal aircraft used for gunship operations by the USAF, the AC-119K Stinger and the AC-130 Spectre (both A and E models were employed). Both of these offered high lift capacity, long time over target, and slow speed characteristics, which made them ideal gun platforms. The main armament of the AC-119K Stinger consisted of four 7.62 miniguns capable of firing 6,000 rounds per minute plus two 20mm Gatling guns capable of firing 2,500 rounds per minute. The AC-130A Spectre was armed with two 40mm Bofors cannon capable of firing 120 rounds per minute and two 20mm Gatling guns with a rate of 2,500 rounds per minute. There were five AC-130E aircraft in Southeast Asia, all of which were equipped with a 105mm gun in addition to the 20mm and 40mm armament. On these, the 105mm gun re-



The AC-130E Spectre (Pave Aegis) carries two 20mm Gatling guns (forward), one 40mm cannon, and a 105mm gun.

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placed the aft 40mm gun, giving an armament configuration of two 20mm Gatling guns and one 40mm Bofors cannon in addition to the 105mm gun. This system was nicknamed Pave Aegis. The primary advantages of the system were first, the ability of its 38 pound 105mm projectile to put 5.6 pounds of high explosive (HE) on the target as compared to 0.8 pounds of HE for the two-pound 40mm projectile; second, a more visible ground mark when using white phosphorus ammunition to identify targets for accompanying fighters and, finally, better survivability for the gunship. All of the gunships used computerized fire control.⁶⁴

(S) As of December 1972 USAF gunship assets were located as follows:⁶⁴

Ubon RTAB Thailand	9 AC-130A	Spectre
Da Nang AB Vietnam	*9 AC-119K	Stinger
Bien Hoa AB Vietnam	*5 AC-119K	Stinger

*AC-119K assets in Vietnam were turned over to VNAF in November 1972 and were on loan to the USAF after that time.

(S) The critical situation which occurred as a result of the enemy offensive led to greatly expanded use of the gunship for close support of troops in contact. The gunships were sometimes the only air support available during enemy contacts. This was not a new role for the gunship, as its original development had been for that purpose. Later versions of the gunship, however, were even more effective in employing massive firepower due to their possession of better sensors and improved armament. The ground units increasingly used gunships as a result of their experiences during the enemy offensive. It was at An Loc that emphasis for the Spectre shifted from interdiction to support of troops in contact and close air support. Spectre crews were provided with crude, hand drawn maps of the city, and one pilot recalled his instructions from the ground as "go north along main street for three blocks, turn east there, and hit the second house from the corner." The ability of Spectre to destroy buildings within 10-20 meters of friendly troops was especially advantageous.⁶⁵

(S) During periods of inclement weather or darkness the gunships were still effective if the ground units had an I-band radar transponder beacon. The use of this equipment enabled the gunship to detect the beacon and thus the position of the friendly ground unit was fed into the computer. The ground observer gave a range and bearing to the target he wanted to be struck. This was set into the computer as an offset. Then a few rounds were fired as the plane orbited overhead. After these were adjusted by the ground unit, the plane fired for effect. Even in total darkness the gunship was able to fire within 100 yards of friendly positions provided either the low light television or the

infra-red sensors were available as backup. Lacking such backup, 200 yards was the minimum distance from friendly troops that the gunship would engage under normal circumstances.⁶⁶

(S/NF) The enemy broke off many contacts without further struggle when gunships appeared on the scene. Gunships were frequently the only support available during the crucial hours of the offensive. For example, on the morning of 25 May the initial attack on Kontum City was repulsed by gunships and some VNAF TACAIR. At Kontum gunships were used for flak suppression while cargo aircraft were attempting airdrops. The gunships used their 2KW light to briefly illuminate the drop zone and give the pilot visual confirmation of its location. This somewhat improved the accuracy of combat airdrops. The gunships also acted as forward air controllers on occasion and were one of the prime sources of reconnaissance information.⁶⁷

(S) The nature of gunships necessitated that they avoid areas with a known SAM (SA-2) threat. Their relatively slow speed made them extremely vulnerable to this threat. They were not normally scheduled in such locations.

(S) The SA-7 missile caused a very serious problem to the slow moving gunships, which were not considered safe in an SA-7 area if they flew below 9,000 feet. This temporarily eliminated the use of the AC-119 in high threat areas as the bullets from the 7.62mm began to tumble at 4,500 feet and were rendered ineffective at that altitude. The 20mm cannon was seldom used above 7,500 feet. After a short interval infra-red decoy packages (flares) became available, providing an effective counter to this threat.⁶⁸

(S) The gunships were particularly vulnerable during daylight operations, since the orbit over the target was easily observed. It was relatively easy to drive the gunships off the target, especially when 37mm and 57mm AAA arrived on the scene. This was more of a problem to the AC-119Ks since they operated at 5,500 feet altitude, whereas the AC-130 gunships, at 10,500 to 12,500 feet, were above the main threat.⁶⁹ A summary of gunship statistics is shown in Figure B-14.

Credible Chase Combat Evaluation

(S) Messages were received on 17 and 18 February 1972 from JCS and CINCPAC, respectively, which directed all planning and programming of Credible Chase combat evaluation in South Vietnam to be canceled. This project was an attempt to develop a program for the VNAF in which ground sensors were to be monitored by special aircraft with a short takeoff and landing (STOL) capability.

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(S) On 18 February 1972 a message from the Chief of Staff, USAF said that in lieu of the combat test, the Tactical Air Command would plan and conduct a CONUS operational test and evaluation of the Credible Chase STOL aircraft and related sensor equipment at Elgin AFB, using maximum feasible participation by VNAF air and ground crews.⁶⁰

Herbicides

(S) On 2 March 1972, MACV and the American Embassy received joint DOD/STATE authority and guidance to provide RVNAF with a limited herbicide operations capability. The authority included the following:

—US authority for the use of herbicides remained unchanged from 1971.

—MACV and the American Embassy were permitted to provide RVNAF with remaining in-country US helicopter and ground spray equipment. This equipment was provided for the purpose of enhancing the security of firebase and installation perimeters where other methods of vegetation controls were not possible or feasible.

—South Vietnam was to be encouraged to establish commercial sources for herbicide supply. The US forces were authorized to provide herbicides to support US and RVNAF requirements until commercial sources were established.

—RVNAF was not to be encouraged to develop a herbicide capability beyond that necessary for

perimeter operations.

—US technical/training assistance was limited to that necessary for perimeter operations.

In response to the above direction MACV provided RVNAF the remaining equipment on a one-time issue basis without Military Assistance Service Funded support. The RVNAF Joint General Staff was advised to take appropriate action to incorporate commercial procurement into the South Vietnamese Defense Budget.

(C) Five AGAVENGO helicopter sprayers were provided to JGS in May.⁶¹

Search and Rescue

(U) One of the reasons for the outstanding morale of US aircrew members was that in the event they were downed, they knew that every possible effort would be made to rescue them. This confidence was a vital factor in maintaining the esprit of air units. There was a practical as well as a humanitarian concern in the rescue effort. The cost of training a pilot or aircrew member was hundreds of thousands of dollars. In 1972 alone the men rescued and thus able to fly again constituted enough manpower to supply aircrews for a wing.

(U) The Third Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group (3d ARRGP) was charged with providing a combat search and rescue (SAR) capability in Southeast Asia and providing the tactical forces required to rescue and recover personnel engaged in combat operations in or adjacent to hostile terri-

USAF FIXED WING GUNSHIP SORTIES

1972

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC

		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
SOUTH VIETNAM	AC130	1	2	2	267	278	210	143	97	135	141	136	131
	AC119	4	13	24	159	225	130	212	227	157	119	149	79
LAOS	AC130	439	381	403	55	60	16	29	11	12	17	91	143
	AC119	262	208	256	102	47	36	34	44	62	62	12	0
KHMER REPUBLIC	AC130	0	10	2	33	49	74	76	115	51	59	60	23
	AC119	0	0	0	0	21	77	43	10	1	0	1	0
TOTAL BY TYPE	AC130	263	393	407	355	387	300	300	223	198	217	287	297
	AC119	439	221	280	261	293	243	289	281	220	181	162	79
TOTAL		702	614	687	616	680	543	589	504	418	398	449	376

Source: PACAF

Figure: B-14

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The HH-53 Jolly Green Giant.

tory. Their area of responsibility encompassed an area of more than 1.1 million square miles.

(C) Headquarters 8d ARGP was located at Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam. The unit was responsible for the command and control of all USAF aerospace rescue and recovery forces in Southeast Asia. In addition it had command and control of all other USAF, USN, USMC, and USA nr resources involved in search and rescue operations. This control was exercised through the Joint Rescue Coordination Center (JRCC) which was collocated with the 7th Air Force Tactical Air Control Center (Blue Chip) and the sub-regional Rescue Coordination Center (RCC) at Nakhon Phanom RTAFB, Thailand. The headquarters was under operational control of the Commander, Seventh Air Force, and the Commander, 8d ARGP served on the 7th Air Force staff as Director of Aerospace Rescue. Sub-units were located at all operational bases used as beddown by the USAF in SEA except Bien Hoa.

(C) When a situation requiring the use of rescue resources was reported to the JRCC from any source, a decision was made as to who should handle the rescue. As a rough rule the areas were divided as follows:

—The JRCC handled rescue in the Republic of Vietnam, North Vietnam, Laos and the Khmer Republic south of 14 degrees north.

—The RCC at Nakhon Phanom, when directed by the JRCC, controlled those missions in Thailand, Laos, Republic of Vietnam north of 14 degrees north, and all of North Vietnam west of five miles inland from the Gulf of Tonkin.

—The USN normally handled rescues over water or up to five miles inland in North Vietnam. In rescue operations, however, time was of the essence and these geographic divisions were not permitted to interfere with a rescue if circumstances dictated otherwise. The nearest available rescue vehicle which could safely accomplish the mission was utilized regardless of the service to which it belonged. Interservice cooperation in this area was never less than outstanding. Statistics were not available on USN and USA rescue efforts; however, the remainder of this item describes the USAF rescue effort.¹²

(U) To accomplish the combat SAR mission the 8d ARGP was equipped with the following type aircraft:

—The HH-53 Jolly Green Giant helicopter was

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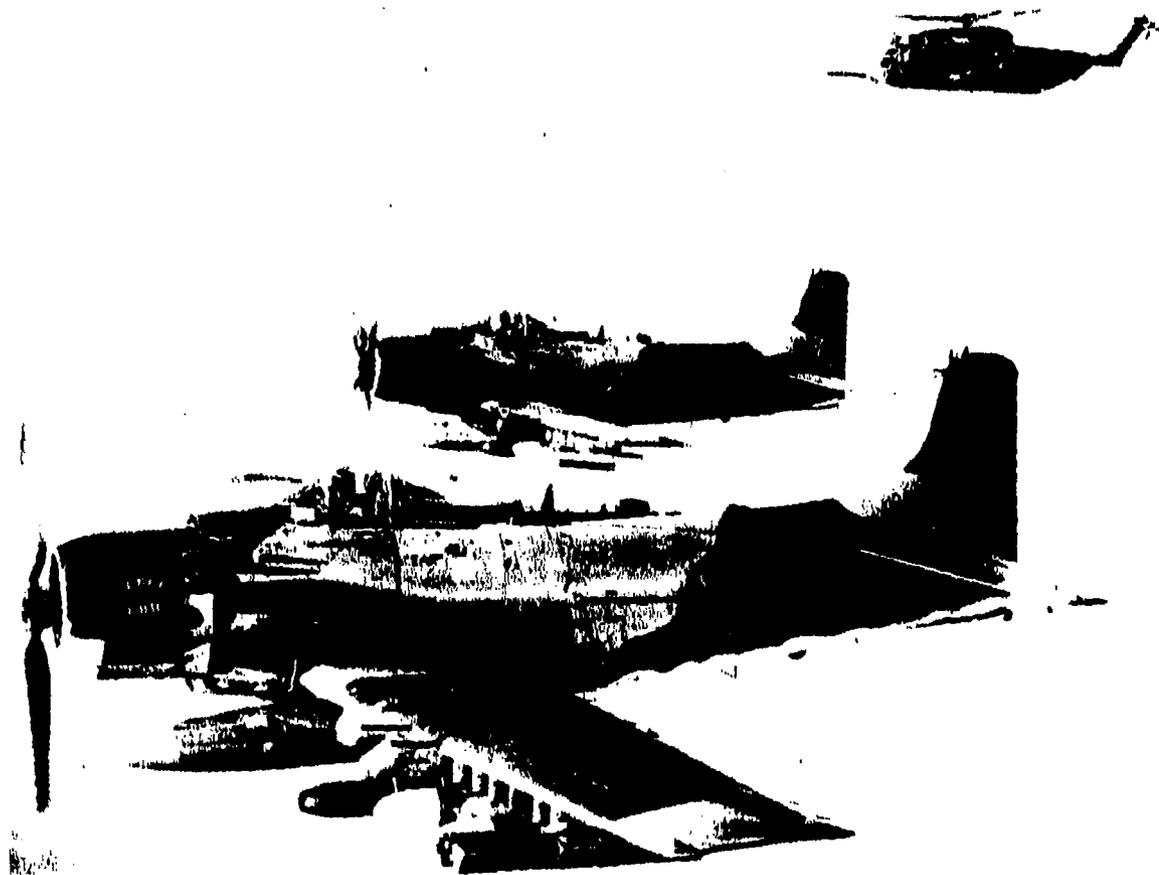
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Two A-1Es "Sandycat" escort an HH-53.

the primary long range aircrew recovery vehicle. This helicopter was on ground alert at strategic points throughout Southeast Asia and was also placed in airborne orbit as necessary to meet specific requirements of the tactical and strategic forces operations. The HH-53 had armor protection and was equipped with three 7.62 miniguns. It was equipped with a refueling probe which mated with a drogue on the rescue King aircraft. The hoist in the helicopter could be used with a stokes litter or a special jungle penetrator which could be lowered and recovered through the dense foliage. It was the ability to refuel which gave the helicopter the long range required for distant rescue.

—The HC-130P King aircraft performed the role of airborne coordination center to direct the rescue effort from on or near the scene. The King was also the airborne filling station for the helicopters. Because of its vulnerability, the HC-130P did not usually go into the high threat areas, but rather

orbited nearby in a less hostile area.

—The HH-43 Pedro helicopter provided local base rescue support at all Southeast Asia bases where tactical aircraft were assigned. The Pedro provided a vehicle for close in rescue and fire fighting crash rescue capability through the use of the rotor wash and a special fire suppression kit designed to create a foam corridor through which an approach to a burning aircraft could be made for rescue purposes.

—On rescues in hostile areas a fourth member of the SAR task force was the accompanying tactical fighters (RESCAP). The function of the RESCAP was to protect the Jolly Green Giants, to assist in locating the survivors, to suppress hostile fire in the area of the rescue, to keep the enemy away from the downed airman, and to recommend the safest routes of ingress and egress for the helicopters. The RESCAP function was performed up until November by the A-1E, known, when performing this

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duty, as the "Sandy." It was a rugged airplane, well-armed with an excellent close support weapons system. Its main disadvantages were that it was slow and thus lost critical time in reaching the rescue area, and secondly, it had no aerial refueling capability. In November the alert commitment for RESCAP was assumed by the A-7D, which also retained the functional descriptor Sandy. This change offered advantages. The A-7D could reach the scene much faster and could also search a wider area in the same period of time. The A-7D could also refuel in the air from KC-135s and could thus stay in the vicinity for a long time. It was an

(S) The SAR mission was part of the planning in any large strike. The rescue team orbited in one of several tracks which were located out of the high threat area but close enough so they could reach a downed pilot or crewman quickly. For example, on a LINEBACER special mission to North Vietnam, the SAR orbits were usually located in eastern Laos in the area known as the Gorilla's Head (eastern BARREL ROLL). The SAR mission in high threat areas was also given combat air patrol (SARCAP) to protect it from the MIG threat. As a measure of effectiveness, during the North Vietnamese offensive from 30 March to 15

**SEARCH AND RESCUE STATISTICS
1972**

MONTH	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 73
COMBAT SAVES	3	3	17	10	158	11	7	6	19	6	12	22	10
NON COMBAT SAVES	6	4	6	2	10	9	10	14	2	14	17	3	7
SAR SORTIES*	39	75	92	247	129	306	158	90	86	115	204	198	35

* Includes all sorties chargeable to the rescue Sandys, Kings, and other aircraft as well as the helicopters.

RESCUES PERFORMED BY AIRCRAFT AND BY CATEGORY OF PERSON RESCUED

AIRCRAFT	USAF C/NC	USN C/NC	USA C/NC	PWMAF C/NC	CIV C/NC	TOTAL C/NC
HH-43.....	9/16	0/2	3/0	9/1	0/0	21/19
HH-53.....	83/21	19/0	87/4	31/3	35/9	255/48
HC-130P.....	0/33	0/0	0/2	0/0	0/5	0/40**
TOTAL	92/70	19/11	90/6	40/4	35/14	276/105

* C—Combat; NC—Non Combat

** MEDEVAC

Source: 3d ARRG Records

Figure: B-15

excellent close support tactical fighter. It also had sophisticated electronic equipment which gave it an all-weather navigation capability lacking in the A-1E.

(C) The SAR area had to be approached cautiously, as the enemy frequently captured survival radios of downed pilots and activated the distress signal. The condition of the downed airmen was also a factor in how the rescue was conducted. If he was injured, crewmen from the rescue aircraft had to go and get him.

(S) The SAR task force normally consisted of two HH-53C Jolly Green Giants in a high/low configuration (i.e., one at treetop level and one at higher altitude), an HC-130P King, and four to six Sandys. In addition, there was other aircraft support as FACs, MIGCAP, IRONHAND, ECM, or others as demanded by the circumstances of the missions. The King acted as airborne mission coordinator to direct the entire effort.⁶⁸

August, 182 aircrew members were downed in South and North Vietnam. Of these 182 crewmen, 83 were recovered.⁶⁴ A summary of rescue statistics is shown in Figure. B-15.

Airlift in the Republic of Vietnam

(U) USAF aircraft provided vital logistics support within the Republic of Vietnam. Because of the nature of the terrain and the large enemy presence it was frequently possible for the enemy to interdict ground lines of communication. When this occurred, airlift was used to bring in vital cargo. Even when alternate modes of transportation were available, airlift was used when speed was essential, as in the case of perishable materials. The fact that airlift was available for cargo delivery greatly enhanced the logistical situation. It was possible to maintain relatively small stock levels of material in a centrally located, computer-controlled supply system and, within a very short time, airlift spare

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USAF AIRLIFT IN SOUTH VIETNAM

MONTH	SORTIES	PAX	CARGO (TONS)
JAN 72.....	8,749	95,976	9,988
FEB 72.....	6,066	76,280	7,841
MAR 72.....	4,103	62,087	6,219
APR 72.....	5,126	67,654	17,597
MAY 72.....	4,939	61,776	19,141
JUN 72.....	4,215	67,781	16,064
JUL 72.....	3,384	55,106	9,855
AUG 72.....	2,833	47,727	8,415
SEP 72.....	2,469	50,961	5,970
OCT 72.....	2,171	44,881	4,849
NOV 72.....	1,964	38,180	5,687
DEC 72.....	1,671	43,786	5,006
JAN 73.....	2,273	127,016	4,869

Source: SEADAB

Figure: B-16

parts to field units. This reduced expense and duplication of effort enormously. A summary of USAF airlift effort is shown in Figure B-16.

Combat Airdrops in South Vietnam

(C) During North Vietnam's invasion of the South commencing in late March 1972, Communist infantry troops attacking in multidivision strength employed the strategy of completely surrounding a defending ARVN force and choking off supply lines. The successful deployment of the airdrop resupply mission often meant the difference between the holding or abandoning of a strategic defense position. The situation at An Loc was a classic example. The city was surrounded on 9 April. Daily aerial resupply, using airdrop procedures, was critical to the successful defense by the ARVN. Civilians who had failed to evacuate the city were also dependent on successful airdrops for food. All USAF aerial resupply drops were flown with the C-130 aircraft.

(C) On 15 April 1972, MACV requested the first of an extensive series of airdropped supplies to the besieged ARVN forces at An Loc. Five daylight sorties were accomplished between 15 and 18 April. Results were satisfactory, but all aircraft suffered moderate to severe battle damage, culminating in an aircraft loss on the 18th of April. Up until this point the standard Container Delivery System (CDS) was used. Very close cooperation with the forward air controller was required both from the standpoint of preventing collisions over the target area and also to obtain advice on the safest approach path. All of these precautions did not eliminate the greatest danger, enemy ground fire, which was intense on all approaches to the city. At night the ground fire, while still intense, was less of a problem, but the crews had extreme difficulty locating the drop zone. Setting up the standard night drop

zone approach light pattern was simply not possible, for the many fires in the area made it indistinguishable.

(C) It was obvious that a system was required which would enable the drop to take place above the range of hostile ground fire. The standard CDS from high altitude was not feasible because the slow rate of descent led to excessive drift and thus a high rate of loss. From 19 to 23 April experimentation was conducted with a locally devised system, using a tie around the skirt of the parachute which would prevent it from opening fully. The tie was cut by a time delay cutter after the chute reached a preset altitude. Release of the tie enabled the chute to open fully and a normal rate of descent was attained prior to impact. Many problems were encountered with parachute malfunctions, leading to an unacceptably high loss rate.

(C) Meanwhile, from 23 April until 3 May, all drops were made from low altitude using standard CDS procedures. Battle damage remained unacceptably high. Night drops were safer but finding the drop zones was extremely difficult and often the men on the ground could not find the bundles in the darkness. Two more C-130s were shot down and 37 received battle damage. Two VNAF C-123s were also downed, and several sustained battle damage.

(U) On 4 May the first drops were made using the confined ballistics system (CBS) high altitude low opening (HALO) system. First, 30-second time delay cutters were used, and later, 50-second delays were utilized. The former provided a drop altitude of 5,700 feet and latter, 8,000 feet. On 8 May it was necessary to initiate use of a second high altitude drop system. This was the use of a slotted high velocity descent chute, which landed cargo at a high speed (105 to 120 ft/sec as opposed to 25-30 ft/sec on a soft drop). To absorb the addi-

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A C-130 executes a high altitude low opening resupply air drop.

tional kinetic energy, six layers of honeycombed packing were placed under the bundle. Although it was found unacceptable for items such as ammunition or explosives, it was satisfactory for some items such as canned goods, dry stores, and water cans (if they were three-quarters or less full). The major advantage was accuracy, which ran around 97 percent in the drop zone. The disadvantage was the danger of ruining the cargo. Another drawback was that the slotted chutes required were in short supply.

(U) To conserve on scarce parachutes and to provide a softer landing for some commodities, yet

another HALO system was employed. This was the F1B system utilizing two chutes. The first was a high speed chute deployed immediately on exit from the aircraft. This high speed chute stabilized the load to a lower altitude where a barometric switch and cutter device released a second chute, resulting in a soft landing. On 18 June the new system was made operational. In spite of some initial problems with parachute malfunctions the F1B system was retained while evaluations were being made.⁶⁵

(U) A summary of airdrops is shown in Figure B-17.

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AIRDROPS

	JUL 72	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN 73
Scheduled Sorties	0	N/A	119	94	82	110	88
Sorties Flown.....	95	120	108	92	78	96	81
Bundles Dropped.....	1,502	1,659	1,458	1,299	962	1,100	1,168
Bundles Recovered.....	1,390	1,589	1,326	1,220	903	1,006	1,133
Percent.....	92%	95%	90%	93%	94%	87%	97%

NOTE: January to June figures not available.

Source: MACDO

Figure: B-17

USAF Participation in Psychological Operations

(S) When the enemy launched the NGUYEN HUE Offensive, the USAF resumed participation in psychological leaflet operations in North Vietnam, which had been halted in 1968. The normal method for leaflet delivery was to use the wind drift technique. This involved dropping leaflets from a very high altitude over areas of suitable risk and allowing the prevailing wind to carry them into enemy areas classified as high threat. Some success was achieved using this technique either from Laos or over the Tonkin Gulf; however, the winds during 1972 were rather sporadic and sustained leaflet operations using this method were not possible. The Laotian drops were more successful than those over the Gulf of Tonkin. Prior to the offensive the wind drift technique had never been used above the 19th parallel. USAF participation in PSYOP was tied directly to the operating authorities and rules of engagement in effect at the time of drop. For example, when air strike missions above the 19th parallel were prohibited, so were PSYOP missions in the area. As the areas of combat operations were changed in accordance with national policy, so it was with PSYOP.

(TS) The wind drift technique was not successful in getting significant numbers of leaflets into the heavily populated areas of the North, such as the Hanoi and Haiphong areas. The C-130 obviously could not overfly these areas for direct drop; therefore, some alternative was needed. One answer seemed to be the use of higher performance aircraft which could overfly the areas with minimal danger. The F-4 aircraft was capable of being configured to this mission; however, to drop an effective number of leaflets would require diverting strike aircraft and escorts which were employed in the higher priority interdiction campaign. Another problem encountered was that for leaflet drops, the F-4 used the same external pod used for chaff dispersal. These were in short supply and priority had to be given to the chaff mission.

(TS) A second alternative seemed to be the use of B-52 aircraft for PSYOP drops. Although it was estimated that as many as 30 million leaflets per

bomber could be dropped in a single mission, in actuality three to seven million was a more practical range. However, B-52 assets were limited and priority was given to combat strikes. Further, the large number of aircraft needed to escort the B-52s precluded frequent use of B-52s for PSYOP missions.

(TS) Still a third alternative was the use of the AQM-34 drone aircraft (unmanned) to drop into high threat areas. This did achieve some success, especially in the Hanoi and Haiphong areas; however, due to a relatively small leaflet capacity the cost was prohibitively high, and the desired saturation could not be obtained by using this method exclusively.^(U)

(S) PSYOP sorties flown by US aircraft from March 1972 through January 1973 are shown in Figure, B-18.

(S) In an effort to increase psychological pressure on the North Vietnamese leadership for a negotiated peace settlement, a program was initiated to distribute mini-radios. These radios were distributed in Military Regions 1 and 2 in South Vietnam, areas of Laos and the Khmer Republic, and in North Vietnam in conjunction with regular leaflet drops. In December four B-52s dropped mini-radios in the panhandle of the North. Other radios were disseminated in float bags off the North Vietnamese coast for the tide to carry ashore. Simultaneously, C-130s dropped mini-radios in Laos, the Khmer Republic, and South Vietnam. A total of 61,000 mini-radios were disseminated during December and January 1973, approximately 48,000 by aircraft and balloon, and 13,000 by float bag.⁽⁷⁾

MINI-RADIO DISSEMINATION

(Dec 72 - Jan 73)

LOCATION	NUMBER
North Vietnam	30,532
South Vietnam	10,296
Laos	14,876
Khmer Republic	5,496
TOTAL	61,000

(TS) Operation TEMPO SURGE was designed to saturate large areas with leaflets immediately prior to the cease-fire. From the President's speech announcing the forthcoming cease-fire until it actually

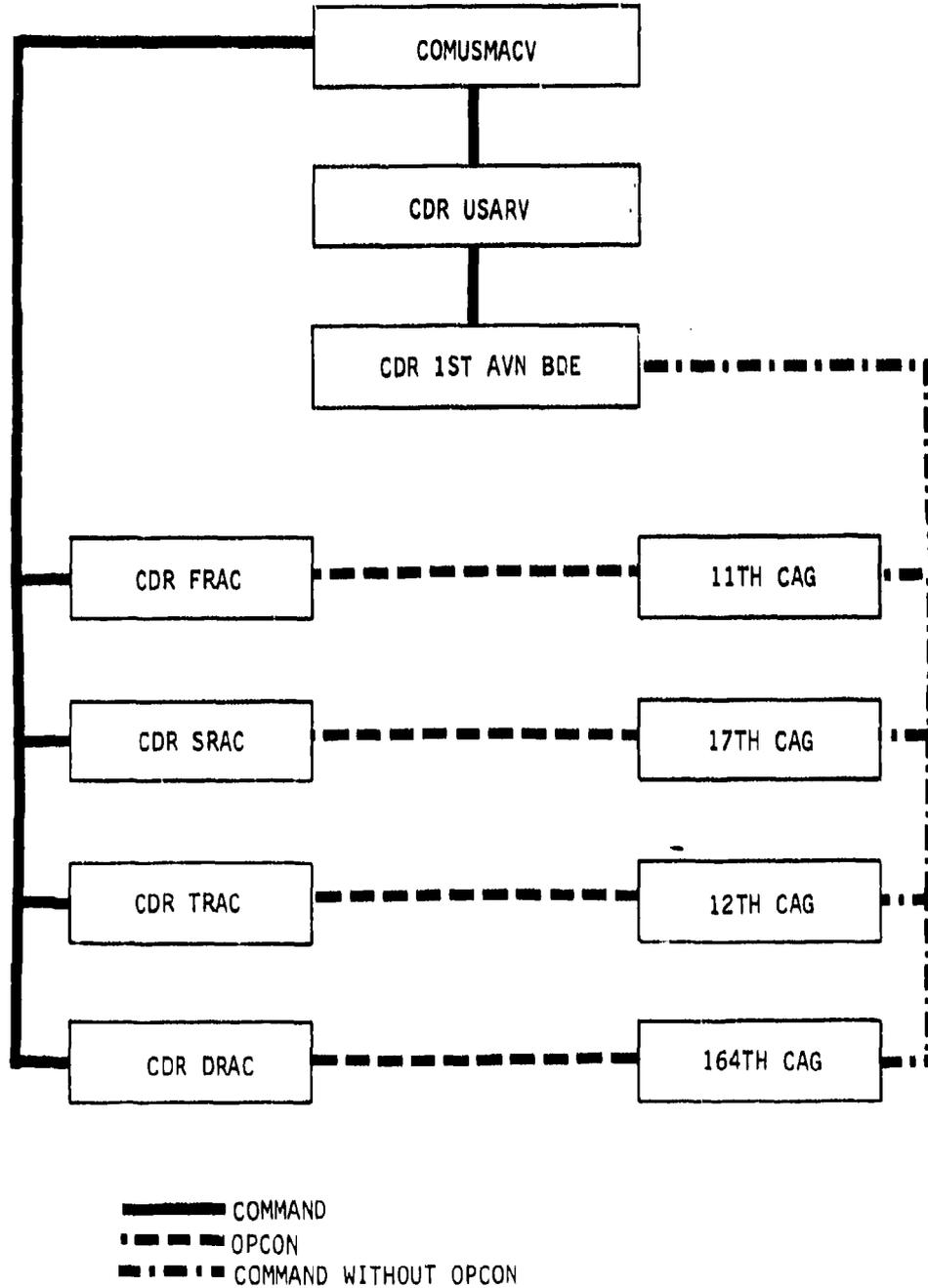
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ARMY AVIATION COMMAND STRUCTURE



Source: 1st Avn Bde

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went into effect (24 January 1100 hours to 28 January 0800 hours), 13 C-130s and two B-52s dropped 170 million leaflets throughout the Southeast Asia theater of combat operations except in North Vietnam.⁶⁸

US ARMY AVIATION

(U) During 1972 Army aviation units were steadily withdrawn from South Vietnam. Even during the early days of the NVA offensive Army aviation units continued to draw down. The following comparative strength figures illustrate this trend.

**US ARMY AIRCRAFT IN THE
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**

	FIXED WING	ROTARY WING	TOTAL
1 JAN 72.....	249	1,849	2,098
1 APR 72.....	157	858	1,015
1 SEP 72.....	75	554	629
1 JAN 73.....	67	427	494
31 JAN 73.....	67	423	490

(U) US Army aviation units in Vietnam were under the command of the Commander, 1st Aviation Brigade, who also was the USARV Aviation Officer.

During the first half of 1972 MG Robert N. Macklin commanded the brigade. On 13 July 1972 MG Macklin relinquished command to BG Jack V. Mackinnon. Operational control of the combat air groups (CAG) was vested with the commanders of the regional assistance commands in which they were located (Fig. B-19).

(U) The 1st Aviation Brigade/USARV Aviation Staff relocated its headquarters from Long Binh to the Saigon MACV Annex in September 1972 and assumed the staff and functions of the 34th General Support Group Headquarters, which was inactivated.⁶⁹

(U) The 34th General Support Group was responsible for all direct support aircraft maintenance, repair parts, supply, transfer, and retrograde for USARV aircraft. The group accomplished its mission by controlling an aircraft direct support maintenance company in each military region as well as the Aviation Supply Activity and Army Materiel Management Center at Tan Son Nhut AB, and the

USNS CORPUS CHRISTI BAY, the Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility, anchored in Vung Tau Harbor.

(U) Due to personnel reductions the 34th Group Headquarters was inactivated on 15 September 1972, and its missions, functions, and remaining personnel were amalgamated with the 1st Aviation Brigade. The direct support companies previously subordinate to the 34th Group were retained and assigned to the combat aviation group headquarters in each military region. The Aviation Supply Activity, Army Materiel Management Center, and the Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility were assigned directly to 1st Aviation Brigade Headquarters. This amalgamation saved valuable personnel spaces and permitted the continuation of the missions and functions of both headquarters.

(C) USN CORPUS CHRISTI BAY, the Floating Aircraft Maintenance Facility (FAMF), departed Vung Tau Harbor on 31 October for Corpus Christi, Texas, its home port. The FAMF quartered the 1st Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance Depot) (Seaborne), headquartered at the United States Army Aeronautical Depot Maintenance Center (ARADMAC), Corpus Christi, Texas. The FAMF served as the only depot repair facility in USARV for aircraft components, avionics equipment, aircraft armament systems, and parachutes. It also performed direct and general support maintenance as required.

(U) The 1st Aviation Brigade was tasked with providing command, staff planning, administrative, and logistical supervision of assigned or attached aviation groups and sub-units. Additionally, the brigade provided planning, coordination, and staff supervision to insure optimum utilization of Army aviation resources within the Republic of Vietnam. The Commander, 1st Aviation Brigade served as advisor to the Commander, USARV on matters pertaining to Army aviation.⁷⁰ Distribution of Army aircraft and unit locations are shown in Figures B-20 and B-21.

(C) After 14 March 1973 the only US Army aircraft remaining in Vietnam were those being used to support the evacuation of FVMAF from Vietnam, and the Four Party Joint Military Commission.

US ARMY AVIATION ASSETS

31 Jan 1973

AIRCRAFT	MR 1	MR 2	MR 3	MR 4
UH-1	39	109	51	31
OH-6	20	20	20	10
AH-1	18	36	18	0
CH-47	6	16	0	8
21	0	0	24	0

Source: 1st Avn Bde G-3

Figure: B-20

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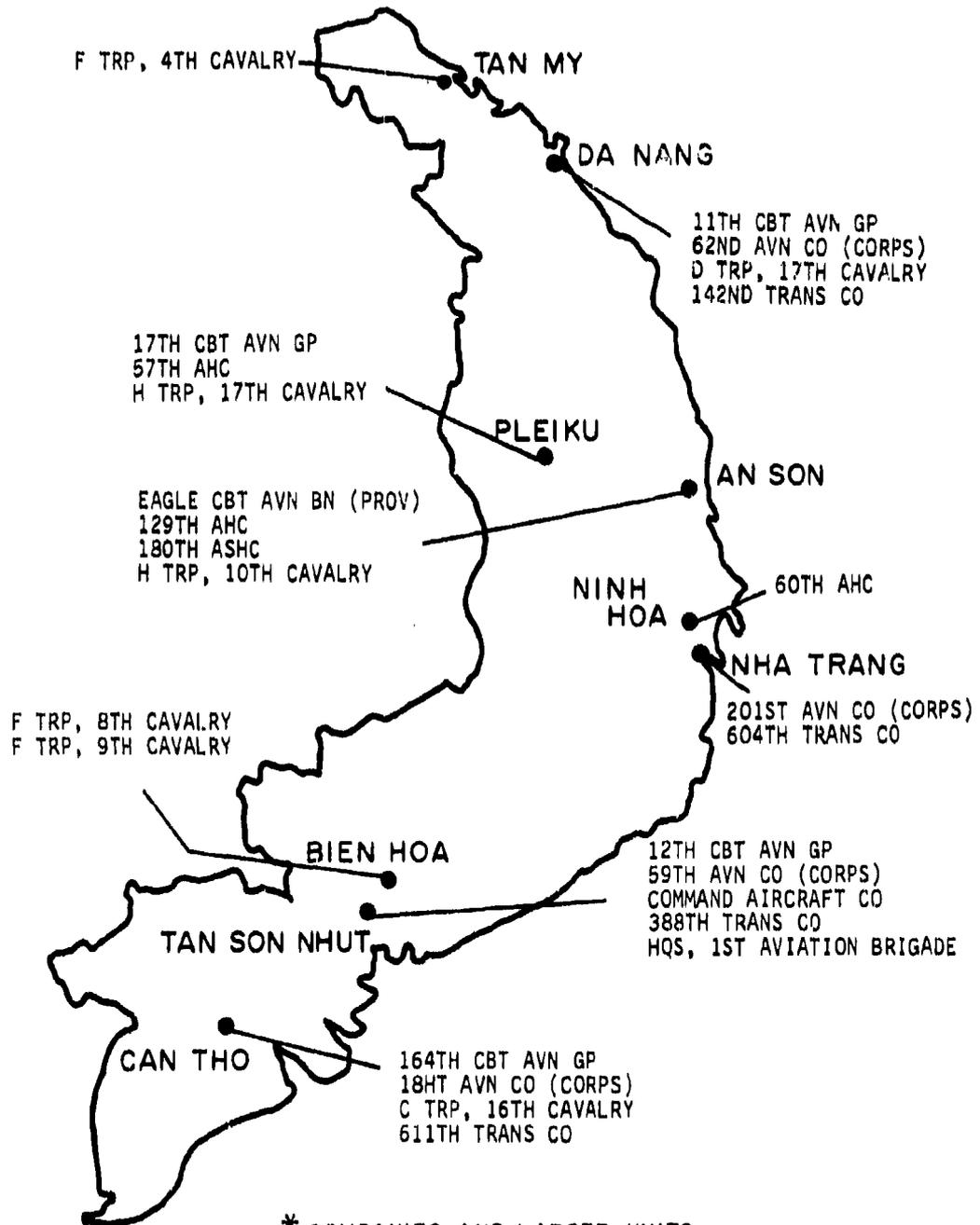
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1ST AVIATION BRIGADE UNIT LOCATIONS*



Source:

1st Avn Bde

Figure: B-21

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ARMY AIR REDEPLOYMENT
Increment XIII (1 July - 31 August 1972)

UNIT	REDEPLOYMENT/DEACTIVATION
37th Signal Battalion Flight Detachment.....	Deactivated
73d Signal Battalion Flight Detachment.....	Deactivated
198th Light Infantry Brigade Headquarters Detachment.....	Deactivated
822d Aviation Detachment (Divisional).....	Deactivated
48th Assault Helicopter Company.....	USAREUR
F Battery, 79th Aerial Field Artillery.....	Deactivated
85th Medical Detachment.....	Deactivated
229th Assault Helicopter Battalion.....	Deactivated
362d Assault Support Helicopter Company.....	Deactivated
361st Aerial Weapons Company.....	Ft. Benning, Georgia
Increment XIV (1 September - 30 November 1972)	
34th General Support Group Headquarters.....	Deactivated
131st Surveillance Airplane Company.....	Ft. Hood, Texas
197th Medical Detachment.....	Deactivated
313th Aviation Detachment (Divisional).....	Deactivated
430th Medical Detachment.....	Deactivated
478th Heavy Helicopter Company.....	Ft. Benning, Georgia

Source: 1st Avn Bde G-3 Figure: B-22

ARMY AIRFIELDS CLOSED
1972-1973

MR	AIRFIELD/HELIPORT	LOCATION	DATE CLOSED
3	Vung Tau Army Airfield.....	Vung Tau	7 Jun 72
3	Laasiter Army Heliport.....	Bien Hoa	29 Jul 72 (reactivated 1 Nov 72)
2	Kontum Army Airfield.....	Kontum	20 Aug 72
3	Long Thanh - North Army Airfield.....	Long Thanh	5 Sep 72
1	Marble Mountain Army Airfield.....	Da Nang	5 Sep 72
3	Headahed Army Heliport.....	Long Binh	4 Oct 72
1	Hue-Phu Bai Army Airfield.....	Hue/Phu Bai	20 Oct 72
3	Sanford Army Airfield.....	Long Binh	21 Oct 72
2	Ninh Hoa Army Airfield.....	Ninh Hoa	8 Feb 73
1	Tan My Army Airfield.....	Tan My	1 Feb 73
3	Bien Hoa Army Airfield.....	Bien Hoa	12 Feb 73
2	An Son Army Airfield.....	An Son	4 Mar 73
2	Pleiku Army Airfield.....	Pleiku	14 Mar 73
2	Nha Trang Army Airfield.....	Nha Trang	14 Mar 73
1	Da Nang Army Airfield.....	Da Nang	14 Mar 73
4	Can Tho Army Airfield.....	Can Tho	14 Mar 73
3	Hotel 3 Army Heliport.....	Tan Son Nhut	14 Mar 73

Source: 1st Avn Bde G-3 Figure: B-23

(C) During the year the programmed drawdowns reduced the number of 1st Aviation Brigade units in Vietnam. A resume of these actions is shown in Figures B-22 and B-23.

**1st Aviation Brigade
Aviation Support to ROKFV**

(U) 1st Aviation Brigade continued to provide aviation support to the Republic of Korea Armed Forces (ROKFV) serving in Vietnam. The ROK

Forces, consisting of the Capital ROK Infantry Division and the 9th ROK Infantry Division, were located in Military Region 2 along the coast from Nha Trang northward to Qui Nhon.

(U) Army air support to the ROKFV was the primary mission of the 129th Assault Helicopter Company and the 180th Assault Support Helicopter Company located at An Son, as well as the 60th Assault Helicopter Company at Ninh Hoa. Further aircraft support was provided by the US Army

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Health Services Group Medical Evacuation Teams (DUSTOFF) at Nha Trang and An Son and the 120th Command Aircraft Company at Tan Son Nhut.⁷¹

(U) Figure B-24 is a resume of the support rendered to ROK forces for 1972-73:

ROKRV SUPPORT

MONTH	SORTIES	HOURS
JAN 72	11,516	3,576
FEB 72	12,407	3,702
MAR 72	13,401	3,532
APR 72	12,871	3,425
MAY 72	16,238	4,031
JUN 72	13,087	3,415
JUL 72	15,185	4,404
AUG 72	15,973	3,788
SEP 72	14,850	4,015
OCT 72	12,522	3,775
NOV 72	13,720	2,853
DEC 72	13,742	2,938
JAN 73	17,035	3,523

Source: 1st Avn Bde G-3

Figure: B-24

Tactical Doctrine

(S) During 1972 there were no major changes in basic tactical doctrine, with the exception that air cavalry units utilized "pink teams" consisting of a single light observation helicopter and a single gunship, rather than teams of two each.

Introduction of Airborne Antitank Missiles

(U) Due to the enemy's use of armored vehicles for the first time in the Vietnam conflict, the United States introduced the tube launched, optically tracked, wire guided missile (known as TOW) to counter the NVA armor threat. The airborne TOW system (XM-26), one mounted on each of two UH-1B helicopters, proved to be an effective weapons system. Accurate, reliable, and extremely mobile, this system was used in Military Regions 1, 2, and 3 during the NVA offensive. It defeated a variety of vehicles ranging from Chinese PT-76 tanks and Soviet trucks to captured ARVN M-41 tanks and 2 1/4 ton trucks. Numerous antiaircraft sites and enemy captured 105mm howitzers were destroyed or neutralized.

(U) The SS-11 (M-22) missile system was also introduced into Vietnam in May to counter the armor threat in Military Region 1. Six systems, each mounted on a UH-1 helicopter, proved moderately effective in engaging enemy armor in the Quang Tri area and were used extensively in destroying enemy bunkers and structures throughout Military Region 1. The SS-11 systems were retrograded to CONUS on 31 October 1972.

Enemy Air Defense

(C) Control of aircraft based at Marble Moun-

tain Army Airfield and operating in northern Military Region 1 had been extremely difficult due to the mountainous terrain blocking communications. This problem was overcome by establishing a communications base in Hue. This base provided flight following service, tactical situation information, and ground communications to the supported units. Aircraft could remain at low altitudes and still maintain effective communications.

(C) The mid-intensity AAA environment in northern Military Region 1 was most effectively countered by nap-of-the-earth flying. Although 57mm and larger AAA did not appear, the existing 37mm and 23mm threat was successfully countered with low level flying. The most effective enemy AAA used was 51 caliber and 14.5mm machine guns. This fire was disciplined and accurate and, when used with interlocking fires, effectively denied an area to airmobile operations. Pilot experience indicated that NVA small arms fire was not as effective as VC small arms fire in Military Region 3, indicating a possible lack of air defense training among some units deployed from North Vietnam.

(U) The enemy's introduction of the SA-7 Strela missile into South Vietnam in April posed a particular problem at altitudes from 200 to 8,000 ft due to the fact that aircrew members were not aware of a missile launch and thus could not initiate any type of evasive action. This threat was significantly reduced with the introduction of specially developed infrared suppression kits which were added to the aircraft as a passive measure to reduce the infrared signature and to diminish the SA-7's effectiveness. The infrared suppression kits were deployed to the field on 26 May and proved to be very effective on observation, utility, and armed helicopters. An active countermeasure in the form of low-level, nap-of-the-earth flying also proved to be a valid and effective technique for countering the SA-7 missile threat.

Use of the Air Cavalry Units

(C) Due to the nap-of-the-earth style of flying the air cavalry was forced to adopt, units reintroduced an old concept of putting two light observation helicopters (LOH) out forward and screening with the gunships behind, flying in a race track pattern. This put the command and control ship behind the gunships and normally in a much safer position, but caused extreme difficulty in obtaining accurate fixes on the targets the lead LOH spotted. Final controlling authority and overall mission control was vested in the command and control observer in the back of the UH-1H chase aircraft. Enroute to the mission area the commander briefed the aircrews on the area boundaries, what information was anticipated, locations of known enemy units, the loca-

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Crewmembers pull maintenance on a Cobra gunship. —

of friendly forces, and fire clearances. Once in visual reconnaissance block, control of the search area was turned over to the lead gunship aircraft commander, who directed the LOH team. The LOH concept also proved itself in the rescue of downed aircrews. LOH crews made most of the rescues of downed air cavalymen. Although it took some time to acquaint the South Vietnamese ground units in Military Region I with the proper utilization and employment of air cavalry assets in a mid-intensity environment, most of these units were utilizing the air cavalry effectively to obtain accurate and timely intelligence for their operations.⁷²

Night Hawk and Night Operations

(C) Night Hawk operations conducted by F Troop, 8th Cavalry were flown in defense of the Da Nang a. Agent reports indicated that the local VC and transport personnel greatly reduced night move-

ment due to Night Hawk operations. The VC offered large rewards to anyone downing a Night Hawk aircraft, indicating the program's effectiveness. Two innovations greatly increased this effectiveness. One was to keep an ARVN officer, who could grant immediate political clearance to fire on suspect areas, airborne in the command and control helicopter; the other innovation was to work Night Hawk with USAF AC-119K Stinger aircraft. These operations were highly successful in defending allied installations in the Da Nang area.

(C) The use of ARVN aero rifle platoons freed the cavalry troop from placing US soldiers in the ground combat role. Beyond that advantage, it provided a close relationship between the supported and the supporting unit. The aero rifle platoon required skills in small unit tactics, stamina, and the ability to rig downed aircraft for recovery. They were organized and trained to recover downed crews

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or aircraft, to lightly cordon egress and entry routes into enemy positions, and to conduct limited ground patrols.⁷³

VNAF Helicopter Augmentation Plan

(U) The 1st Aviation Brigade was tasked to provide assistance to the VNAF in converting two existing VNAF CH-34 helicopter squadrons to UH-1 squadrons and activating 15 UH-1 squadrons and 8 CH-47 squadrons. The program also provided upgraded training to over 600 VNAF pilots and 200 VNAF maintenance personnel by providing over 180 in-country flying hours to VNAF UH-1 pilots and more than 110 hours of flying time to VNAF CH-47 pilots. Maintenance personnel received 30 days of classroom instruction followed by several weeks of on the job training. All pilots and personnel lived and worked daily with Army aviation personnel during their training. There were over 368 UH-1H, 100 CH-47A, and 100 OH-1G aircraft transferred during this initial program and the subsequent ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS Programs.

(U) The final unit to be activated under the VNAF Improvement and Modernization Helicopter Activation Plan 71-80 was the 241st VNAF Medium Helicopter (CH-47A) Squadron. The unit was activated at Phu Cat on 1 May 1972. A 25-man Army aviation assistance team was formed and attached to the air force advisory team at Phu Cat for further training of the VNAF pilots, enlisted crewmembers, and maintenance personnel. The Army team consisted of 13 officer aviators and 12 enlisted flight engineers. They provided further training to the VNAF officer pilots and enlisted personnel of the 241st Squadron in flight techniques, airmobile planning, operations, maintenance, and crew duties for the CH-47A helicopters. Instruction was given on the job during actual flight operations and in the classroom. Approximately 30 hours of visual

flight regulation operations were provided each VNAF pilot. The Army Advisory Training Team completed its mission on 4 September 1972.

1st Aviation Brigade Flying Safety Record

(U) From 1 January 1972 until 31 January 1973 1st Aviation Brigade units flew 548,301 flying hours with only 92 accidents. This rate was 16.8 accidents per 100,000 flying hours.⁷⁴

Army Aviation Airlift

(U) US Army assets were also utilized to provide vital and in some cases life giving support by way of airlift. Figure B-25 shows the airlift summary for US Army aircraft.

Aeromedical Evacuation Detachments (DUSTOFF)

(U) The mission of medical airlift in Vietnam was performed by Army aviation assets under operational control of the MACV Command Surgeon through the 75th Evacuation Hospital and the US Army Hospital, Saigon. As 1972 began there were five locations in-country from which aeromedical services were performed. Northern sections of the Republic were serviced by the 571st Medical Detachment (HA) located at Da Nang. Coverage for Military Region 2 was provided by the 247th Medical Detachment (HA) at Nha Trang and the 237th at Phan Rang and An Son. Military Region 3 coverage was provided from Long Binh by the 159th and 283d Medical Detachments (HA). At Binh Thuy coverage for Military Region 4 was provided by the 57th Medical Detachment (HA). As the US drawdown progressed, the detachments in Military Regions 3 and 4 were relocated and consolidated. The operations center was moved to Long Binh and later to Saigon. As the year ended the 57th

ARMY AVIATION AIRLIFT IN RVN

MONTH	PASSENGERS	CARGO (TONS)
JAN 72.....	283,302	27,257
FEB 72.....	205,358	19,065
MAR 72.....	161,320	16,206
APR 72.....	136,375	13,288
MAY 72.....	156,465	13,589
JUN 72.....	127,790	10,481
JUL 72.....	108,455	8,905
AUG 72.....	97,117	9,147
SEP 72.....	94,056	7,735
OCT 72.....	107,081	9,022
NOV 72.....	83,612	8,365
DEC 72.....	84,688	5,877
JAN 73.....	89,126	8,080

Source: 1st Avn Bde G-3

Figure: B-25

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Medical Detachment (HA) at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut AB provided DUSTOFF airlift for Military Regions 3 and 4. Military Region 2, to include the Korean forces, was covered by the 237th from An Son and Pleiku and 247th from Nha Trang. The 571st at Da Nang covered Military Region 1.

(U) The mission of the helicopter ambulance detachments was to provide aeromedical evacuation to US forces, FWMAF, civilian war casualties, Republic of Vietnam military personnel, and other personnel as directed. To accomplish their mission the helicopter ambulance units used the UH-1H helicopters, equipped with a hoist, and could use the jungle penetrator or the collapsible litter as needed.⁷⁵

(U) The 57th Medical Detachment (HA), located at Binh Tuy Naval Air Station (until relocated in April), provided training for DUSTOFF crews of the Vietnamese Air Force. Flying with American aircraft commanders, over thirty Vietnamese pilots were trained during the first quarter of 1972. At the same time the medics and crew chiefs were trained for their duties. The success of their efforts enabled the American units to be withdrawn, and VNAF assets took over DUSTOFF coverage of the Delta area.⁷⁶

(U) A synopsis of medical evacuation statistics follows in Figure B-28.

US NAVAL AIR OPERATIONS

(C) Naval air forces operating in Southeast Asia

were under the operational control of the Commander, 7th Fleet. Air assets, with the exception of two land-based units, were located aboard the attack carrier (CVA) Strike Force offshore (Task Force 77). CVA assets were under control of the CVA Strike Group (Task Group 77.4) (Fig. B-27).

CVA Disposition

(S) During 1972 the US Navy had from three to seven attack aircraft carriers (CVA) operating in the Western Pacific area (WESTPAC). Prior to the NVA offensive three were so assigned. This did not mean that there were always three carriers on station at once. On the contrary, one or more might be off station for R&R, replenishment, or repair work. In the first three months of 1972 the on station rate was 1.4 carriers on station per day. During the height of the buildup, when there were for a brief time seven carriers assigned, it was not intended that more than four should be on the line simultaneously. Figure B-28 shows the CVA on station data.

(S) Each CVA averaged 60-70 aircraft strike sorties per day, so that with four carriers on the line the Navy was able to sustain an average sortie rate of about 250 per day.⁷⁷

(S) The normal deployment of carrier assets (with four carriers on the line) was one CVA positioned to the south for employment in Military Regions 1 and 2 and North Vietnam.⁷⁸ There were two operating areas established and these, in turn,

DUSTOFF (MEDEVAC) STATISTICS 1972 AND 1973

NUMBER OF PATIENTS EVACUATED	1972	*1973
US PATIENTS.....	2,858	80
FWMAF PATIENTS.....	2,004	140
ARVN PATIENTS.....	2,774	25
RVN CIVILIAN.....	341	2
OTHER.....	39	0
TOTAL.....	9,105	256
OPERATING DATA		
NUMBER OF TIMES HIT BY HOSTILE FIRE.....	37	0
NUMBER OF HOIST MISSIONS (PATIENT).....	70	1
NUMBER OF TIMES HIT BY HOSTILE FIRE.....	0	0
(ON HOIST MISSION)		
NUMBER OF CREW KILLED.....	1	0
NUMBER OF CREW WOUNDED.....	8	0
NUMBER OF PATIENTS KILLED.....	0	0
NUMBER OF PATIENTS WOUNDED.....	0	0
NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT COMBAT LOSSES.....	2	0
TOTAL NUMBER OF MISSIONS FLOWN.....	11,373	467
TOTAL FLIGHT HOURS.....	13,351	555
AVERAGE NUMBER OF AIRCRAFT ON HAND.....	302	27
AVERAGE PERCENTAGE OF AIRCRAFT AVAILABILITY.....	78.5	88.5

* As of 6 February 1973.

Source: USAHSVCGPY

Figure: B-26

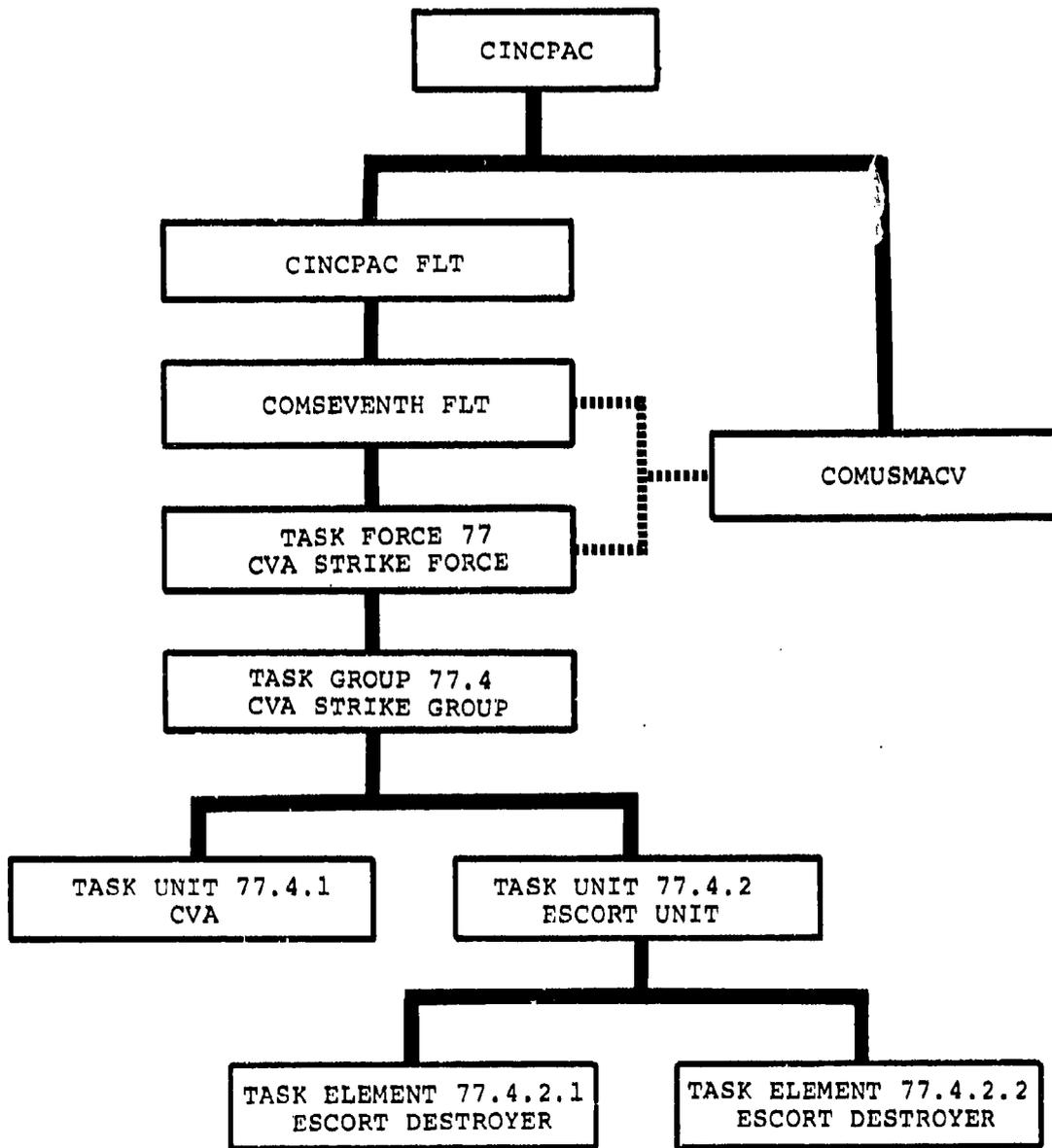
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SEVENTH FLEET ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND RELATIONSHIP



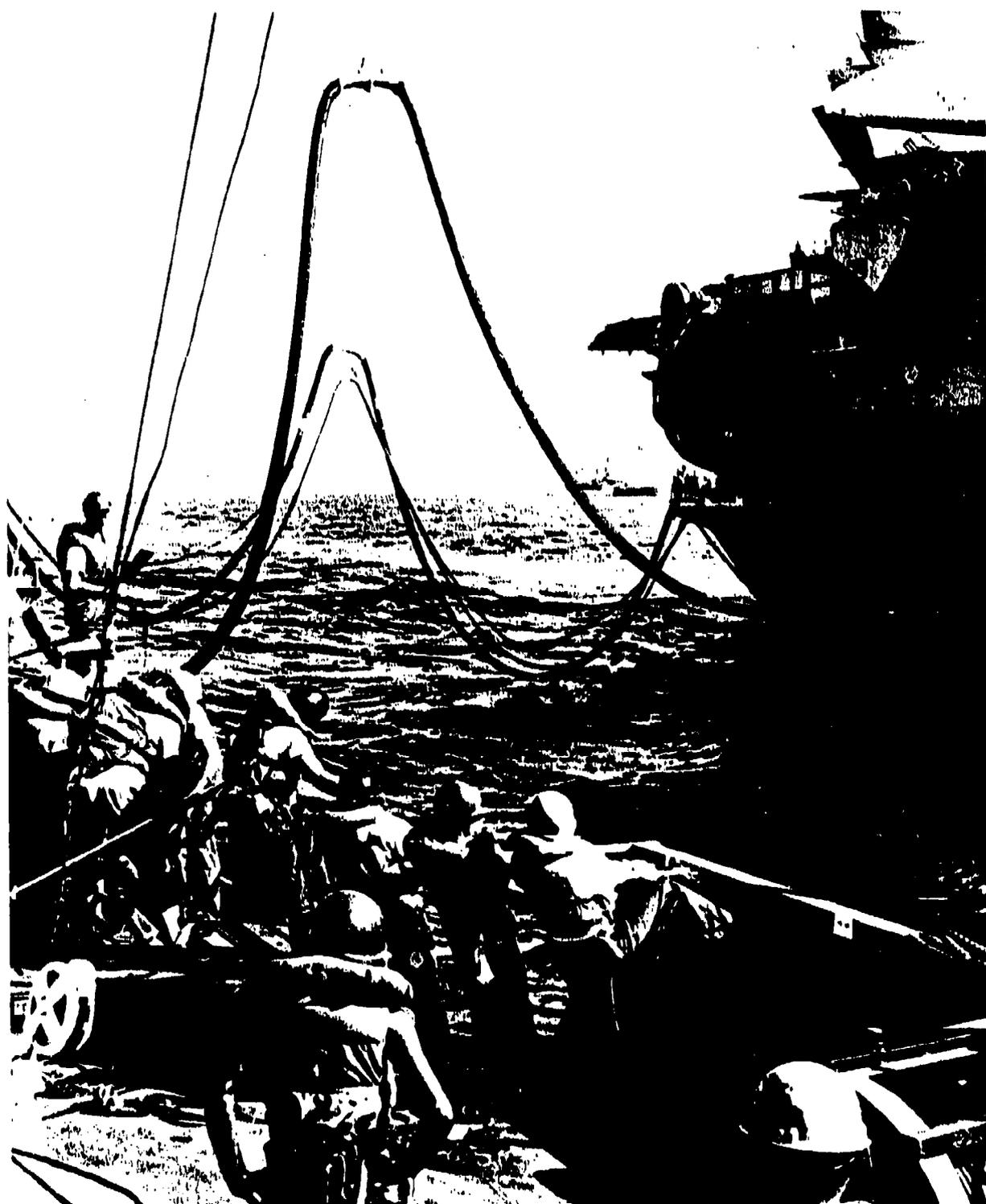
————— COMMAND
..... COORDINATION
CVA-ATTACK AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Source: COMSEVENTHFLT

Figure: B-27

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The USS CONSTELLATION receives underway replenishment.

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control system which enabled monitoring of multiple flights simultaneously. Having the guided missile ship also control the MIG combat air patrol minimized the danger of launching guided missiles at enemy aircraft when friendly aircraft were in the vicinity. Another vital by-product of Red Crown tracking was that if an aircraft went down, its last position could be noted. This was extremely valuable in the subsequent SAR effort.⁴⁰

(C) The typical carrier daily schedule was a rigorous one. The first takeoffs and recoveries were normally before dawn, and it was usually late into the night before all aircraft were recovered. Thus, the crews could normally expect to be at flight quarters twelve to fifteen hours each day. Nor was this the only duty for the crew. To sustain a carrier on a heavy operations schedule, it was necessary to refuel the carrier, take on fuel for the aircraft, take on ordnance, and take on stores, provisions, and perishable items. This was done roughly every third day and was known as UNREP or underway replenishment.

(U) There were several methods used to transfer fuel and cargo at sea. The first of these was for the auxiliary ship (i.e., tanker, refrigerator, ammunition, or cargo ship) to come alongside the ship to be resupplied, attach refueling lines or highline rigs between the two ships and pass the cargo over from one to the other.

(U) The second method used was actually a refinement of the first. By the use of a fast underway replenishment ship, it was possible to simultaneously rearm, reprovise, and refuel. This greatly speeded up the evolution; however, it also complicated the problem of receipt and stowage aboard.

(U) The third method was to use helicopters (VERTREP) to transfer the cargo aboard. This was used for special cargos and was often used while the other operations were in progress.

(U) Whichever evolution took place, the combined actions of the sea, the fact that the two ships were steaming at relatively high speed, and the ever-present threat of breakdown or steering casualties, all required that the lines between the ships be hand-tended. These operations were often accomplished at night and sometimes in very rough sea conditions. It was not unusual for a carrier to finish a long day of flight operations only to go alongside an auxiliary ship for replenishment. If stores or ammunition were being transferred, then getting it aboard the receiving ship was only half the problem. Once aboard, the material had to be properly stowed. On large ships forklifts and elevators were available, but on small ships all the cargo was moved by hand.

(S) A measure of one ship's schedule can be

gained by looking at the deployment schedule for USS KITTYHAWK (CVA 68). The KITTYHAWK left San Diego 17 February 1972 for the Western Pacific area. This was one month before her scheduled deployment. She had been alerted on 8 February for her early deployment with no reason given. She was not given the usual ORE (Operational Readiness Exercise) period in Pearl Harbor, but proceeded immediately to the coast of Vietnam. On 9 March she began conducting strikes directed at the enemy buildup in Military Regions 1 and 2 in South Vietnam. For the next twenty days KITTYHAWK pilots averaged 1 1/2 sorties per day per pilot. The ship returned to Subic Bay on the 28th after four days of encountering engineering plant problems. She was scheduled to be in port until 6 April. When the enemy offensive struck on 31 March, she was redeployed on an emergency basis five days prior to her scheduled sailing. She arrived off Military Region 1 and conducted missions on 3 April and then began strikes in the Dong Hoi area of North Vietnam on 6 April. This began a 52 day period on the line with only two standdown days due to engineering problems.⁴¹

(S) Naval air operations have been previously discussed as part of the country-by-country summaries. It should be noted that the US Navy assets provided many elements of the support packages used for strikes in North Vietnam. The proximity of the carriers to the target areas gave the USN aircraft a very substantial time over targets, which was especially helpful on MIGCAP, BARCAP, and ECM missions.

(U) For a discussion of mining operations in North Vietnam see Naval Operations, this Annex.

Use of "Smart" Ordnance

(S) One of the topics often raised for discussion was the use of the so-called "smart" ordnance and whether or not its effectiveness justified the high cost of the system. Perhaps one example will assist in bolstering the argument for its use on point targets. The sequential photographs (Figures B-29 to B-31) show the Ninh Binh Railroad and Highway Bridge in North Vietnam. The first photo shows the bridge intact on 14 May with the railroad track approach on the south bank interdicted by bomb craters following a conventional strike. The next photo depicts the same bridge on 4 July after ten conventional ordnance strikes had been directed against it during the interim period. The photo shows that both banks of the river were heavily cratered and the bridge itself had one short section which was hit, repaired, and again intact at the time of the photo. The third picture shows the bridge on 19 July after two Walleye II electro-optically guided bombs had been dropped on it. The

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	NAME <u>NAVY SEAL RC A 111 BK 0</u> CTY <u>UN</u>	
	COORD <u>20 530 N 123 5425 E</u> BE <u>Bele 00477/01</u>	
	MSN <u>00 3159</u> DATE <u>18 May 72</u>	
	POS <u>00 40 000</u> FRAME <u>1233</u> SP <u>405</u>	
	PRODUCED BY NAVY CONFIDENTIAL GP-4	

Source: CINCPACFLT

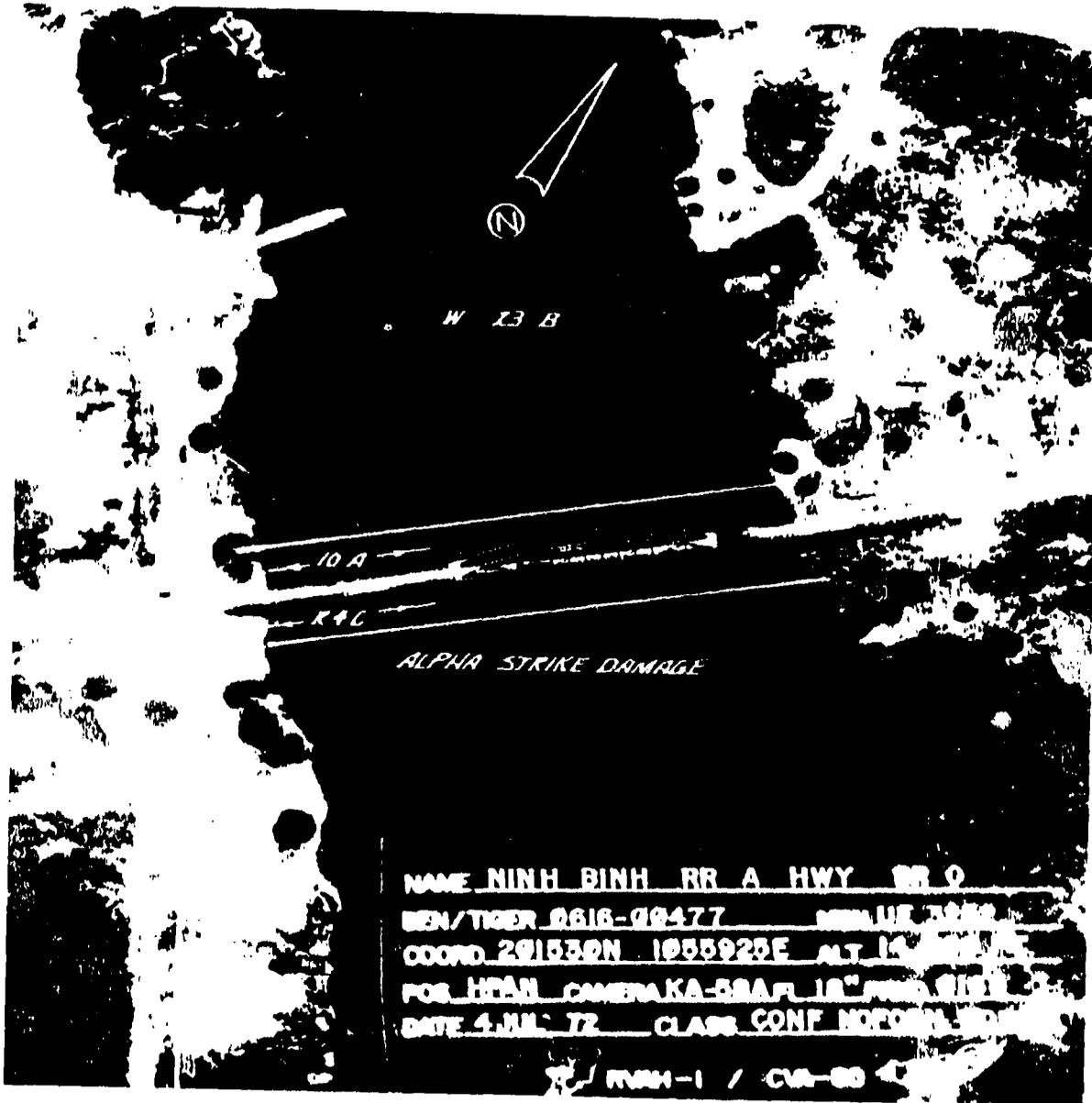
Figure: B-29

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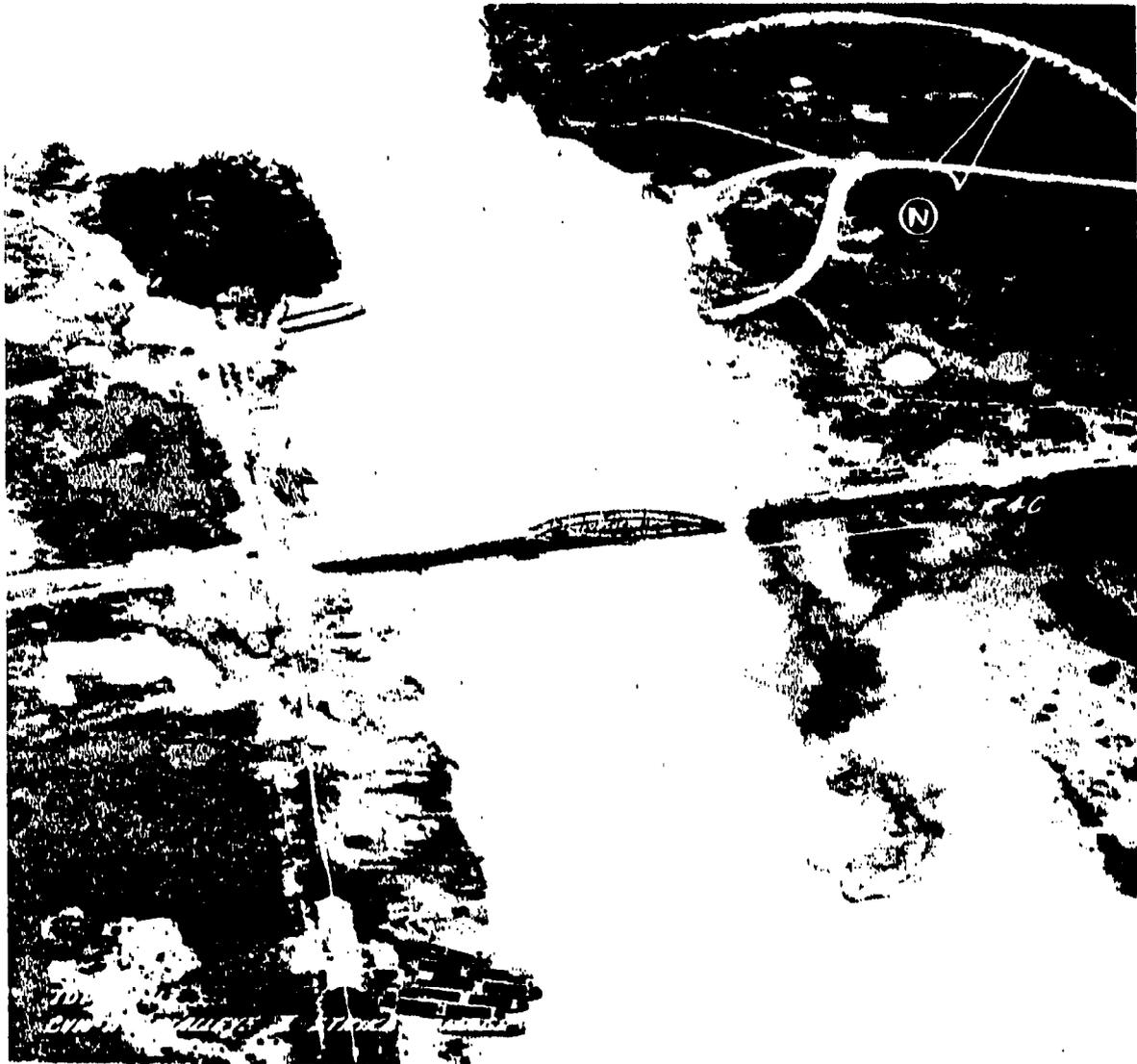
Source: CINCPACFLT

Figure: B-30

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VIA 198 800

	NAME <i>Alvin S. ...</i>	CTY <i>VA</i>
	COORD <i>20 16 30 N 106 59 25 W</i>	RF <i>006 00977</i>
	MSN: <i>46 5269</i>	DATE <i>19 July 77</i>
	POS <i>18° 20N 8000'</i>	FRAME <i>0085</i> SP <i>541</i>
PRODUCED BY NAVY		CONFIDENTIAL GP-4



Source: CINCPACFLT

Figure: B-31

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whole center span has been dropped into the water and obviously required major repairs to put it back in service. Another point in favor of the "smart" bomb was that there was considerably less pilot

exposure to countermeasures during the one Wall-eye II drop than in the previous ten sorties dropping conventional ordnance." A summary of naval air statistics is shown in Figure B-32.

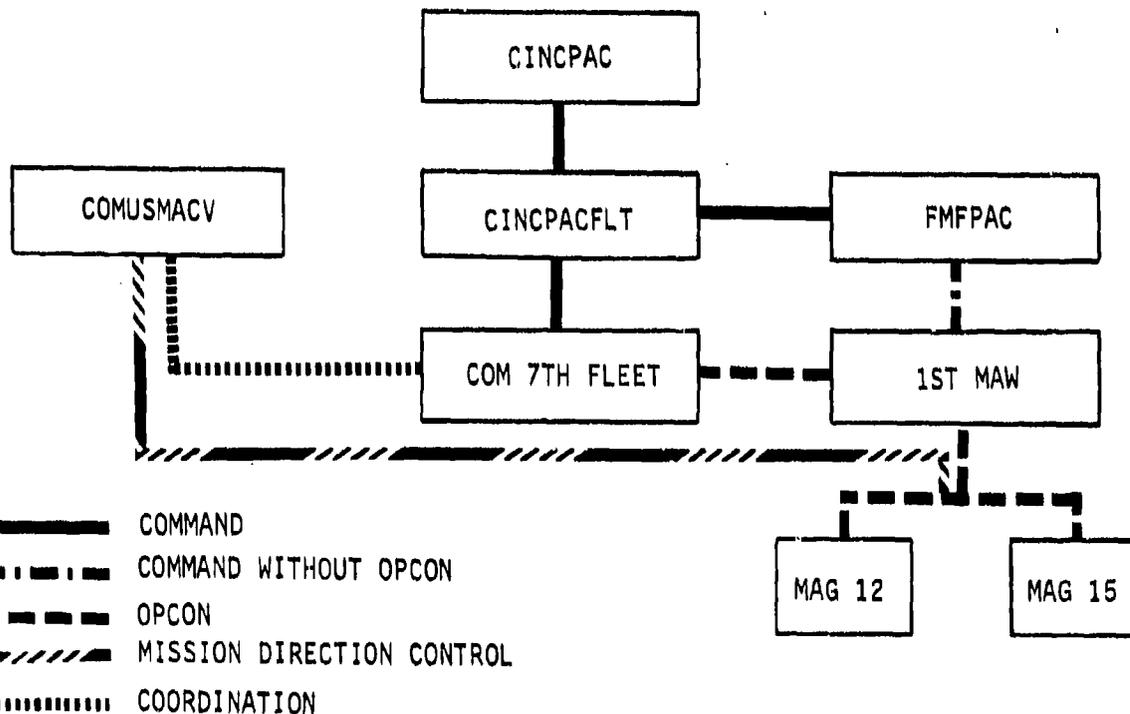
**SUMMARY OF US NAVY AIR ACTIVITIES (SORTIES)
ATTACK/TOTAL**

MONTH	LAOS	KHMER REPUBLIC	RVN	HVN
JAN 72.....	2,718/3,070	0/8	8/8	0/0
FEB 72.....	2,563/2,929	187/174	690/690	0/0
MAR 72.....	3,051/3,651	16/16	128/128	0/0
APR 72.....	718/1,075	66/70	4,788/5,470	1,250/3,524
MAY 72.....	73/73	12/12	3,189/3,784	3,920/7,602
JUN 72.....	13/17	44/44	2,028/2,642	4,151/7,917
JUL 72.....	2/14	2/2	2,048/2,223	4,175/8,469
AUG 72.....	17/18	4/4	2,138/2,201	4,746/9,145
SEP 72.....	12/12	8/8	1,660/1,739	3,937/7,940
OCT 72.....	14/14	6/6	2,026/2,170	2,764/6,819
NOV 72.....	1,888/2,477	6/6	2,727/2,775	1,716/5,038
DEC 72.....	114/124	24/24	2,014/2,323	1,883/3,842
JAN 73.....	491/521	89/89	3,665/3,911	863/4,974

Source: SEADAB

Figure: B-32

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS FOR MARINE AIR



Source: 1st MAW

Figure: B-33

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US MARINE CORPS AVIATION

(U) US Marine Corps air assets were reintroduced into Vietnam for the first time since May 1971 as part of the tactical air buildup in response to the North Vietnamese invasion. This was discussed previously at the beginning of the Air Operations section in the context of the overall TACAIR buildup. During their service in Southeast Asia, USMC air units were under the operational control of the Commander, Seventh Fleet through the First Marine Air Wing; however, mission direction authority for USMC strikes was vested in the DEPCOMUSMACV for Air. This was in accordance with the long standing policy of having a single manager for air resources in Southeast Asia (Fig. B-33).

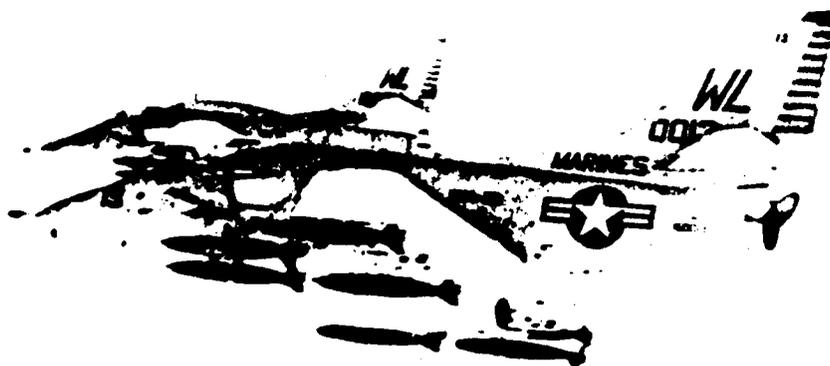
The assets for Marine Air Group (MAG) 36 that were deployed with amphibious vessels off Vietnam were under operational control of the Commander Seventh Fleet. USMC Air Order of Battle is shown in Figure B-34.

USMC Redeployments

(S) On 5 April 1972 the First Marine Air Wing (MAW) received a warning order from Fleet Marine Force Pacific to be prepared to deploy two tactical squadrons to the Republic of Vietnam. The squadrons selected were VMFA 115 and VMFA 232 based at Iwakuni, Japan. On the morning of 6 April the First MAW received word that the Joint Chiefs of Staff had issued an execute order for the movement. The two squadrons were immediately launched to go to Naval Air Station, Cubi Point in the Phil-

ippine Islands. There they awaited receipt of the execute order from the Commander, Seventh Fleet for the deployment to Vietnam. At 1744 hours on 6 April the execute message was received and was relayed to Cubi Point. The lead element of VMFA 232 arrived at Da Nang AB, Vietnam at 2133 hours the same day with the lead element of VMFA 115 arriving just 15 minutes behind. All aircraft were in place in Da Nang by the end of the second day. By the end of the fourth day, 27 F-4s, all required support elements, and required personnel were in place. Nine hundred eighty-four Marines and over two million pounds of cargo had been airlifted to Vietnam. Crew orientation required two days and on 9 April the first USMC combat missions were flown. It was a demonstration of the great mobility and flexibility of tactical air power.

(S) On 12 May 1972 the Commanding General, 1st MAW was alerted to deploy two squadrons of A-4 aircraft and support elements to Bien Hoa AB, Vietnam. VMFA 211 with 17 A-4E aircraft and VMFA 311 with 15 A-4E aircraft reported the capability to deploy within 12 hours. Once again, part of the aircraft were sent to NAS, Cubi Point to await the execute order. On 16 May at 0609 hours (Saigon time) the order to execute deployment was received. By 1750 hours (Saigon time) there were 27 A-4s in place at Bien Hoa. The other five arrived the next morning. After area indoctrination and an area checkout ride with a USAF A-37 pilot familiar with the local area, the Marines were ready for combat and flew their first missions on 19 May.



A-4Es of the VMFA 311 flying south of Bien Hoa AB in July 1972.

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USMC AIR ORDER OF BATTLE

Da Nang AB RVN (MAG 15 FWD)			HMM	USS Tripoli (LPH-10)	
VMFA	115	12-F4B *	165		14-CH46D
VMFA	232	15-F4J *			6-CH53D
VMFA	212	12-F4J **		USS Denver (LPD-9)	4-UH1E
H & MS 12 Det.		4-TA4F ***	HML 307 Det.		2-UH1E
Bien Hoa AB RVN (MAG 12 FWD)			HMA 309 Det.	USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19)	1-AH1J
VMFA	211	17-A4E ****	HML 307 Det.		2-UH1E
VMFA	311	15-A4E ****		USS Okinawa (LPH-3)	
Nam Phong RTAFB (MAG 15 FWD)			HMM 164		14-CH46
VMFA	115	11-F4B			4-CH53
VMFA	232	12-F4J			2-UH1E
VMA(AW)	533	12-A6A			2-AH1J
VMCR	152 Det.	4-KC130F		USS Cleveland (LPD-7)	
H & MS	36 Det.	3-CH46D	HMA 309		7-AH1J

* Arrived Da Nang 14 April, moved to Nam Phong, Thailand 12 June.

** Departed Da Nang 18 June to MCAS Kaneohe, Hawaii.

*** Arrived Da Nang 14 April, departed 30 June for MCAS Iwakuni, Japan.

**** Arrived Bien Hoa 16 May, departed 2 February 1973 for MCAS Naha, Okinawa and MCAS, Iwakuni, Japan.

Source: 1st MAW

Figure: B-34

(S) In accordance with national policy to reduce the US military presence in Vietnam the Marines were tasked to provide a planning schedule for the relocation of Marine Air Group (MAG) 15 to Nam Phong, Thailand. On 17 May BG A. W. O'Donnell, Deputy Wing Commander, 1st MAW and a USN/USMC survey team conducted an on site inspection of Nam Phong. On 22 May O'Donnell was named Commander of Task Force DELTA and given responsibility for the opening of Nam Phong. Augmentation was acquired from Iwakuni MCAS, Japan to assist in preparations.

(S) After three weeks of arduous work converting the bare runway, Nam Phong was ready to receive the first complement of aircraft. On 15 June lead elements of MAG 15 arrived at their austere new location, and VMFA 115 brought 11 F-4B aircraft to Nam Phong, pausing enroute to fly combat missions over South Vietnam. On 17 June the first combat missions from Nam Phong were flown to strike in Military Region 1 of South Vietnam. A detachment from VMCR-152 with four KC-130F tanker aircraft was attached to Task Force DELTA to provide refueling support required by the longer range mission. On 18 June VMFA-232 arrived with 15 F-4J aircraft, completing the relocation of MAG 15 from Da Nang. VMFA(AW)-533 with 12 A-6 aircraft was reassigned from Iwakuni MCAS and also joined Task Force DELTA, commencing combat operations immediately. A detachment with three CH-46Ds arrived at Nam Phong to provide support for MAG 15. On 18 June VMFA 212, which had

remained at Da Nang during the move to Nam Phong, was ordered to return to Kaneohe MCAS, Hawaii.

(S) On 2 February 1973, following the signing of the Vietnam cease-fire, MAG 12 was returned from Bien Hoa to Naha, Okinawa and Iwakuni MCAS, Japan as part of the US withdrawal.³³

Employment of USMC Air Assets

(S) On 13 May 1973 HMM 164 of the 3rd Marine Amphibious Unit located off the coast of Vietnam participated in Operation SONG THANH 5-72. This operation included a vertical assault wherein units of the VPMC were airlifted by USMC helicopters near Hue. This was the first counteroffensive action taken by the South Vietnamese Marines since the NVA offensive began in March. The assault was comprised of approximately 1,100 Vietnamese Marines landing in two waves in two separate landing zones. One helicopter was downed by enemy fire and was ordered destroyed. Two other helicopters received light damage. One crewmember was wounded. HMM 164 provided resupply and MEDEVAC for the operation.

(S) The 31st Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU), with composite squadron HMM 164, remained on station off the coast of South Vietnam, providing support for 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade contingencies. The 33d MAU, with composite squadron HMM 165, also on station off the coast of South Vietnam, participated in Operation SONG THANH 9-72 on 29 June 1972, with the helicopter insertion of two Vietnamese Marine battalions.³⁴

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(S) On 11 July HMM 164 and HMM 165 provided airlift for a combat assault of 800 Vietnamese Marines southeast of Quang Tri City. Heavy automatic weapons fire was received on the approach to the landing zone. One CH-53 was downed by an SA-7 Strela missile. The aircraft crashed and was destroyed by fire, killing two crewmembers and forty-eight VNMC soldiers, who were officially listed as missing and presumed dead. There were only seven survivors. Two CH-46s were downed by ground fire but were later retrieved by CH-53s.

(S) During the months MAG 15 (FWD) was located at Da Nang, close support and armed reconnaissance missions were flown in Route Pack (RP) 1 in North Vietnam, in Military Regions 1 and 2 in South Vietnam, in Laos, and in the Khmer Republic. When their location was changed to Nam Phong, sorties were targeted in Military Region 1, BARREL ROLL in Laos, and RP 1 in North Vietnam. VMFA(AW)-533 conducted all weather and night systems ordnance delivery missions as fraggged by the 7th Air Force. The A-6

launches on the evening of 12 August were the first such night missions to be flown from Nam Phong. MAG 15 units flew combat and combat support sorties comprised of close air support, fighter cover, and electronics countermeasures in North and South Vietnam, the Khmer Republic, Laos, and over the Gulf of Tonkin. After the restriction on bombing above the 20th parallel in North Vietnam was imposed on 23 October, the participation of MAG 15's F-4s in the BAR CAP mission was discontinued. The group's F-4 and A-6 aircraft concentrated on close air support and interdiction sorties in Military Regions 1 and 2 in South Vietnam.

(S) MAG 12 assets from Bien Hoa AB flew combat sorties mostly in Military Regions 3 and 4 in South Vietnam and in the Khmer Republic. Most of these were in close support of ARVN troops in Military Regions 3 and 4. The use of offshore assets from LPDs is covered under Naval Operations.⁴⁰

(U) A resume of USMC sorties is shown in Figure B-35.

USMC COMBAT SORTIE RATE

	VMFA 115	VMFA 212	VMFA 232	VMFA 211	VMFA 533	VMF 311	DET HMM 15	VMCJ 1 & 2	VMGR 152	VMFA 333	HMA 369	TOTAL
1972 APRIL	223	223	284	0	0	0	3	43	0	0	0	730
MAY	369	487	510	182	0	181	32	241	0	0	0	1982
JUNE	297	341	426	622	48	648	0	80	53	0	14	2499
JULY	348	0	101	722	313	727	0	120	77	192	74	2671
AUGUST	329	0	194	792	199	775	0	94	72	204	186	2845
SEPTEMBER	293	0	247	694	212	720	0	96	0	179	290	2731
OCTOBER	269	0	314	782	261	790	0	83	0	262	77	2838
NOVEMBER	433	0	494	734	220	718	0	114	0	293	145	3181
DECEMBER	370	0	354	744	176	740	0	138	0	186	0	2888
1973 JANUARY	570	0	432	658	174	648	0	53	0	313	0	2848
FEBRUARY	220	0	248	0	114	0	0	0	0	79	0	661

Source: FMFPAC

Figure: B-35

NAVAL OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

(U) By virtue of its territorial configuration, North Vietnam had a heavy dependence upon sea-borne lines of communications. Because of a lack of

industrial self-sufficiency, the North required assistance from more technologically advanced allies. This was especially true with respect to the sophisticated weapons of modern warfare. The advanced air de-

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fense system of North Vietnam, for example, was almost totally dependent upon the resources of the USSR and the People's Republic of China. The North Vietnamese received 90 percent of the materiel for the war effort through the port of Haiphong. The American decision not to reduce Haiphong earlier in the war led the enemy to believe that they would be afforded continued use of the port facility.

(U) The measured response of naval forces to the changing national policy and shifting tactical situations demonstrated the flexibility available to the possessor of seapower.

(C) US naval forces operating off Vietnam were under the operational control of the Commander, Seventh Fleet (COMSEVENTHFLT). Assigned to the Seventh Fleet were a series of task forces grouped by function: a command force, patrol force, logistics force, cruiser/destroyer (surface) force, amphibious force, carrier (CVA) strike force, mine countermeasure force, and fleet marine force. From these assigned assets the Commander, Seventh Fleet formed task organizations as required for specific missions. Direct liaison was authorized between the Commander, Seventh Fleet and the CVA strike force commander with COMUSMACV for purposes of coordination of effort (Fig. B-36). CVA operations are discussed under air operations.¹¹¹

MINE WARFARE

(S) The decision to close enemy harbors by the use of air-dropped mines was one of the turning points of the war. Such a course had been proposed some years earlier; however, for various reasons it had been rejected. A contingency plan for the mining was in existence when the decision was made, and mines were already aboard Seventh Fleet ammunition ships. Although these mines had been loaded aboard the ammunition ships without concealment, there was no evidence that the enemy was alerted or took any countermeasures against the mine contingency. The relatively light opposition encountered by the mining aircraft tended to lend credibility to the belief that surprise was achieved. None of the mining aircraft were lost.

(S) On 6 May 1972 ships on station off Vietnam were alerted by CINCPACFLT to the possibility of mining operations in the near future. On 8 May COMSEVENTHFLT and Commander CTF 77 were warned that Operation POCKET MONEY, the mining of North Vietnam's harbors, was to be implemented. On 8 May the order to execute was received, effective 0900 hours on 9 May (Saigon time). In the early hours of 9 May, US Navy aircraft and surface units conducted raids in the area of the approaches to Haiphong harbor. Then, at precisely 0900 hours, as President Nixon was announcing his decision to a startled world, aircraft

from the USS CORAL SEA (CVA 43) swooped low over the approach channel and the harbor of Haiphong, laying their deadly cargo of MK 52 naval mines. The President stated that the mines would self-arm at 1800 hours on 11 May (Saigon time), allowing foreign merchant ships three periods of daylight for safe egress.¹¹²

(U) The mining of Haiphong centered on Cua Nam Thien, a narrow channel in the Canal Maritime, which was dredged into the harbor. It was approximately one mile long and 500 yards wide, dredged to a depth of 6.1 meters. Ocean-going ships had to traverse this passage to enter Haiphong; thus, when the channel and the approaches were mined, the port was effectively closed. At the time the mines were laid there were 36 foreign merchant ships in Haiphong Harbor. Twenty-eight vessels were trapped in Haiphong by the mine barrier. Of this total, ten were of Soviet registry and five were Communist Chinese. Three ships were Hong Kong-based British, three Polish, two Cuban, one East German, and four under the flag of Somalia. There were also two Chinese ships trapped at Vinh and two Soviet vessels at Cam Pha.¹¹³

(U) The mines presented a dilemma to the enemy because of the flexibility in their employment. The mines were approximately five feet long and roughly 12 inches in diameter. They could be set either to lay on the bottom or to rise to a preset depth. They could remain dormant on the bottom for a preset period and then arm themselves. There were several methods of detonation. The most commonly used detonator was magnetic, wherein the magnetic field of a ship would be detected by the mine sensing circuits, setting off the mines as the ship passed overhead. Another variation was a pressure sensitive mine which detected variations in pressure caused by a vessel passing overhead. Thus mines could be set to detonate only when a vessel of a certain size passed overhead. A small ship such as a minesweeper would not detonate a mine set for large vessels. A third type of mine employed incorporated an acoustic detonator which was set off by sound waves emitted by a ship's screws. The mines could also be armed with any combination of the above. To further complicate the enemy's sweep problem, a counting device could be used to detonate the mine after the conditions for detonation had been met a certain number of times. The enemy, with limited minesweep capability, was faced with an almost insurmountable task.¹¹⁴

(TS) Although the flexibility mentioned above was available to the US, the mines actually laid in North Vietnamese waters had only magnetic sensing detonators. There were 36 MK 52-2 sea mines laid in the approach channel to Haiphong Harbor. These were augmented in other locations by MK 36 DST

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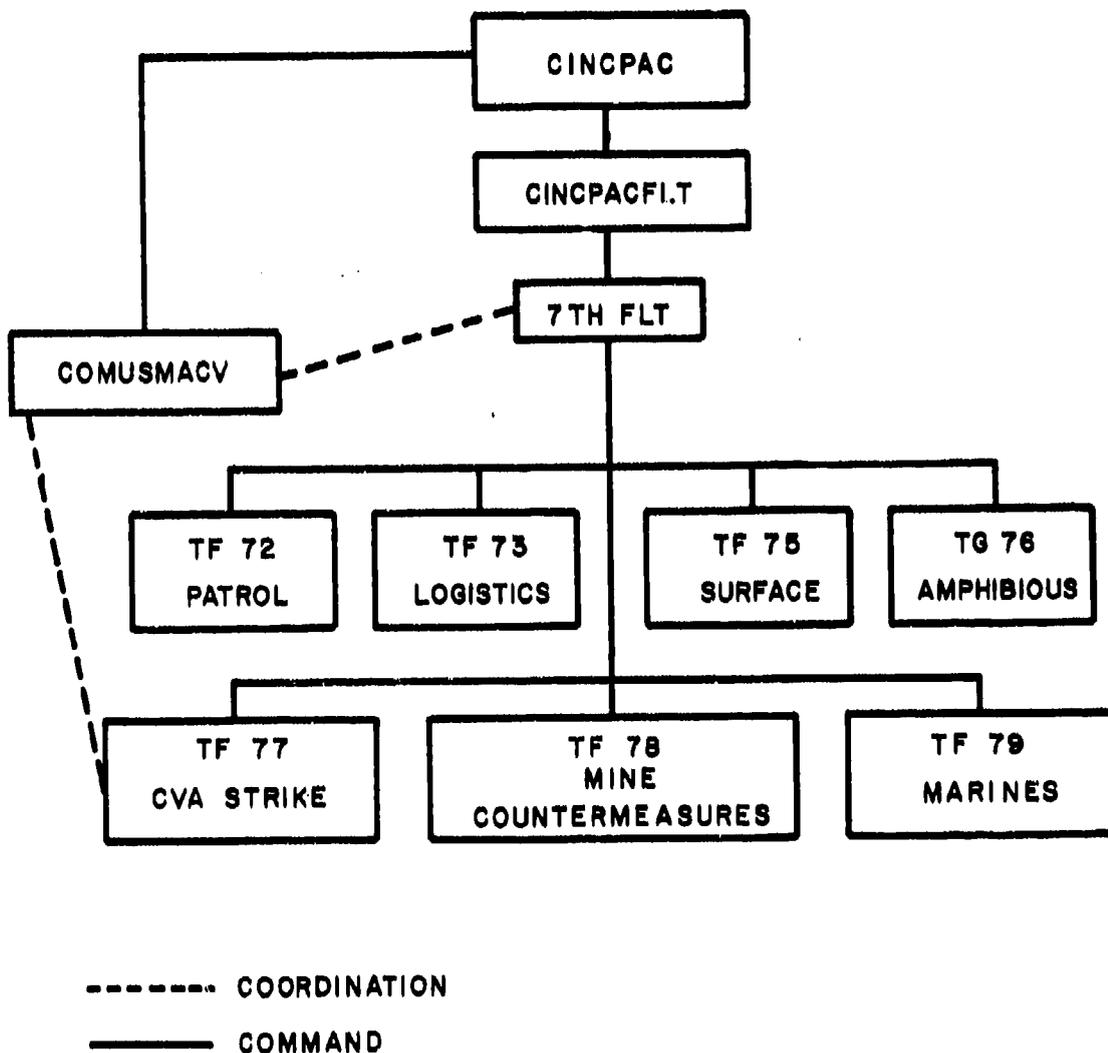
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MOD 2 bombs (fused to act as mines). It should be noted that a relatively small number of mines were employed to seal the port of Haiphong. Because of its single narrow passage the port was easily and effectively closed with mines. During the period 9 to 15 May, 1,116 DST bombs (a bomb fitted with

magnetic detonation circuits) were seeded in the inland waters of North Vietnam and in other suitable harbors of North Vietnam.¹⁰⁰ During September and subsequent months some MK 36 DST MOD 4 bombs with magnetic or acoustic detonating circuits were employed. From 4 to 8 August 1972 solar storms

COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS FOR NAVAL ASSETS



Source: MACDO

Figure: B-36

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caused fluctuations in magnetic fields sufficient to detonate those mines which were set on maximum sensitivity. In subsequent weeks the areas containing MK 36 DST MOD 2 bombs were reseeded. The 36 MK 52 mines in the Haiphong approaches were reseeded on 11 August. By 6 December these mines had all passed the date of self-inactivation, and it was necessary to remine the area. Reseeding operations were completed by 16 December 1972.¹¹

(U) The success of the mine blockade was virtually complete. On 22 May VADM William P. Mack, outgoing commander of the US Seventh Fleet, told newsmen that daily reconnaissance flights of Haiphong harbor had convinced him "no ship is going in or out to our knowledge."¹²

(S) It was well into November before it was reported that one shallow draft vessel had managed to escape Haiphong. It was only after US naval units had been withdrawn from above 20° latitude as a gesture of goodwill during the Paris peace talks that the vessel managed to escape. While the enemy eventually acquired a few small craft capable of minesweeping, there was no evidence of any serious attempt to sweep the mines.

(S) The enemy was faced with an enormous logistical problem due to the mine blockade. Ninety percent of the foreign commerce came by sea. From the USSR, North Vietnam received three-quarters of her war materiel. Roughly 90 percent of it came in by ship. Thus the enemy was forced to realign its entire logistical system while simultaneously conducting a full scale offensive in South Vietnam and defending desperately against an unprecedented naval and air assault on the homeland. Since the sea line of communication was severed, the North was forced to turn to rail, inland water, and highway networks to move commerce and war materiel. This greatly heightened the impact of the complementary air campaign aimed at these networks and at storage areas, pipelines, and transshipment points. Interdiction became more effective with the development of advanced model "smart" bombs. There was evidence that at least 110,000 tons of shipping turned back rather than brave the minefields.

(S) The enemy did attempt to circumvent the mine blockade by the use of offshore anchorages located at Hon Nieu, Hon Matt, and Hon La. The procedure was to bring third country merchant ships to the offshore anchorages and offload them to lighters. In his announcement of the blockade the President stated that, while the ships would not be attacked under these conditions, the lighters would be subject to destruction between the ship and the shore. Naval air and surface units were assigned surveillance of the areas with instructions to attack waterborne logistic craft (WBLC) to pre-

vent the landing of cargo. To assist in this process the Commander, Seventh Fleet positioned US Marine Cobra helicopter gunships aboard the USS DENVER (LPD 9) in the vicinity of the offshore anchorages. Their initial success forced the enemy to unload at night. Although the aircraft were not designed for night operations over water, the marine fliers developed techniques which enabled them to perform with great effectiveness during hours of darkness. Because of the constant pressure on the enemy, the flow of supplies was reduced to a mere trickle, for the small coastal steamers had insufficient tonnage. Unloading lighterage was a slow process at best and had to be done at night when there were no USN air or surface units in the area. A period in excess of a month was required to unload a five to six thousand ton vessel.¹³ Another measure of the effectiveness of the US operations was evidenced by an enemy attempt to float supplies in on the tide, using ropes or swimmers to pull in rafts of cargo. On 18 August the USS EVERSOLE (DD 789) picked up 16 bags of rice floating in the water 6 miles east of Hon La anchorage. That so much effort was expended to obtain rice indicated a severely strained logistical situation ashore.¹⁴

(S) To ensure that no ship captain could enter a minefield unaware of its presence, the rules of engagement provided for the establishment of a notification line composed of surface units known collectively as the Gulf of Tonkin Group (CTG-77.2). These units were tasked to notify third country shipping of the existence of mines in entrances to North Vietnamese ports and that movements towards ports would involve risk. The notification line was established on 14 May as a combined operation of the US Navy and the Vietnamese Navy (VNN). During May only three vessels were detected crossing the notification line. All three were Chinese Communist vessels and continued north even though two of them acknowledged the notification. Ships were notified using all appropriate means including radio transmissions on distress frequencies, signal flags, flashing lights, land hailers, and semaphore. Offshore lighterage was to be attacked only after it had entered within the twelve mile limit. Lighterage inside the twelve mile limit could be attacked as soon as it was clear of any third country ships, after taking the precaution to prevent hitting the ships.¹⁵

(S) Even nature appeared to be assisting in the blockage of the North Vietnamese port of Haiphong. An intelligence assessment made in November 1972 indicated that the Haiphong ship channel was limited by a sand bar across the lower reaches of the Cua Nam Trieu. Prior to the mining, dredging kept the bar at a depth of 10 feet which, when

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Warships of the US Navy steam into the Gulf of Tonkin.

combined with a ten foot tidal effect, allowed merchant vessels with up to a 26 foot draft to enter the harbor at high tide. After the mining began, a US source estimated that silting had occurred at the rate of one foot per month. Thus, in November, the depth over the bar probably had decreased to eleven feet at low tide. At this depth, entry of loaded merchant ships would be limited to those with 20 foot drafts. This would exclude approximately two-thirds of the merchant ships which normally called at Haiphong, even if the mines were removed. Considering the capabilities of the North Vietnamese dredgers, it was estimated that two months would be required after the removal of the mines to restore the ship channel to its premining level.¹⁰⁰

(C) One of the last operations of the Vietnam War was given to the men of Task Force 78, the mine countermeasure force of the US Seventh Fleet. Theirs was the job of sweeping the enemy waters

of mines implanted prior to the peace settlement. Their undertaking was a dangerous one with little of the glamour, but much of the hazard of combat. Using aerial (helicopter) sweep techniques as well as conventional minesweepers, they stayed behind to clean up the residue of war.

SURFACE OPERATIONS OFF NORTH VIETNAM

(S) Naval gunfire operations in North Vietnam were initially known under the code name SEA-DRAGON and later included under FREEDOM TRAIN, then LINEBACKER. The reestablishment of naval gunfire operations in the North came on the morning of 5 April 1972 as part of the US reaction to the NVA offensive in South Vietnam. Established as a surface task group, the naval force was initially authorized to strike targets between the Demilitarized Zone and 17°33'N. On 5 April, this zone was extended to include targets as far north as 18°N.

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THE COMUSMACV MISSION Evolution

(S) The first formal COMUSMACV mission statement in a single source document did not appear until 1969. Prior to that time the mission was derived from directives and guidance from SECDEF, the JCS, National Security Action Memorandums, and 3 May 1968 CINCPAC instructions entitled "Terms of Reference for COMUSMACV" which outlined COMUSMACV military responsibilities. Finally, in October 1969 COMUSMACV approved a formal statement of mission as basic guidance for MACV planners. The essentials of the document were that COMUSMACV would, in pursuit of US objectives:

—Provide maximum advice and assistance to the RVNAF and other appropriate Government of Vietnam agencies.

—Manage US Government civil and military field activities required to support continued accelerated pacification, civic action, and an area security program for the Republic of Vietnam.

—Plan and conduct US military operations in Vietnam and, as directed or approved by CINCPAC in peripheral areas, in coordination with other Free World and Vietnamese Armed Forces.

—Maintain plans for a comprehensive air and naval campaign in the Republic of Vietnam.

(S) In 1970 after the cross-border operations in Cambodia, a revised mission statement made COMUSMACV responsible for:

—The successful execution of the US military operations, military assistance, and advisory programs to promote national security and national development in South Vietnam, and for authorized US military activities in areas adjacent to the Republic of Vietnam which contribute to attainment of the US objectives in the Republic of Vietnam. The objective is to allow the people of South Vietnam to determine their future without outside interference.

1972 Mission Statement

(U) Both the 1971 and 1972 mission statements were expressed in the same terms, derived from the statement by SECDEF that "the mission of US forces in Southeast Asia is to allow the people of the Republic of Vietnam to determine their own future without outside interference." As stated in the revised MACV Directive 10-11, Terms of Reference for USMACV, dated 3 August 1972, the mission of COMUSMACV was to:

—Assist the Government of the Republic of Vietnam to defeat externally directed and supported Communists' subversion and aggression in order to attain an environment which will allow the people of the Republic of Vietnam to determine their

future without outside interference."

Terms of Reference

(S) MACV Directive 10-11 further prescribed the following terms of reference:

a. COMUSMACV is the commander of a subordinate unified command under the operational command of CINCPAC.

b. COMUSMACV is the Commander Designate of the Central Region SEATO Field Force (CCRSFF), Commander Designate of the SEATO Field Force (CSFF), and Commander Designate of the United States Forces Southeast Asia (COMUSSEASIA). In his designated capacities he develops and is prepared to execute plans responsive to those of SEATO and CINCPAC.

c. COMUSMACV serves as the military member of the US Mission Council for purposes of coordination with the Chief of Mission on all matters relating to US military activities in the Republic of Vietnam.

d. In addition to other responsibilities, COMUSMACV is the representative of the Secretary of Defense and CINCPAC with respect to the United States Military Assistance Program (MAP) and the Military Assistance Service Funded (MASF) Program (hereafter collectively referred to as military assistance) in the Republic of Vietnam.

(1) COMUSMACV or his designated representative, as the military member of the US Mission Council, coordinates with the Chief of Mission for military assistance matters to the extent provided for by law, and in accordance with executive orders and such other instructions as the President may promulgate. He coordinates military assistance activities with US Government agencies represented in the US Mission which are concerned with the execution of foreign assistance legislation. COMUSMACV will keep the Chief of Mission informed concerning current and prospective military assistance plans and programs. Unresolved differences between the Chief of Mission and COMUSMACV will be referred to the Secretary of Defense through CINCPAC.

(2) Administrative and logistical support of the USMACV relating to military assistance normally will be provided by the Republic of Vietnam in accordance with the Pentilateral Agreement of 1950, and implementing arrangements thereto, or by the American Embassy in the Republic of Vietnam, or by an administrative agent as directed by CINCPAC. Airlift support for military assistance administrative use will be provided from aircraft assigned or made available to COMUSMACV. Flying hours cost for this purpose will be reimbursed by military assistance funds.

c. COMUSMACV is designated Single Military Representative in the Republic of Vietnam. In this

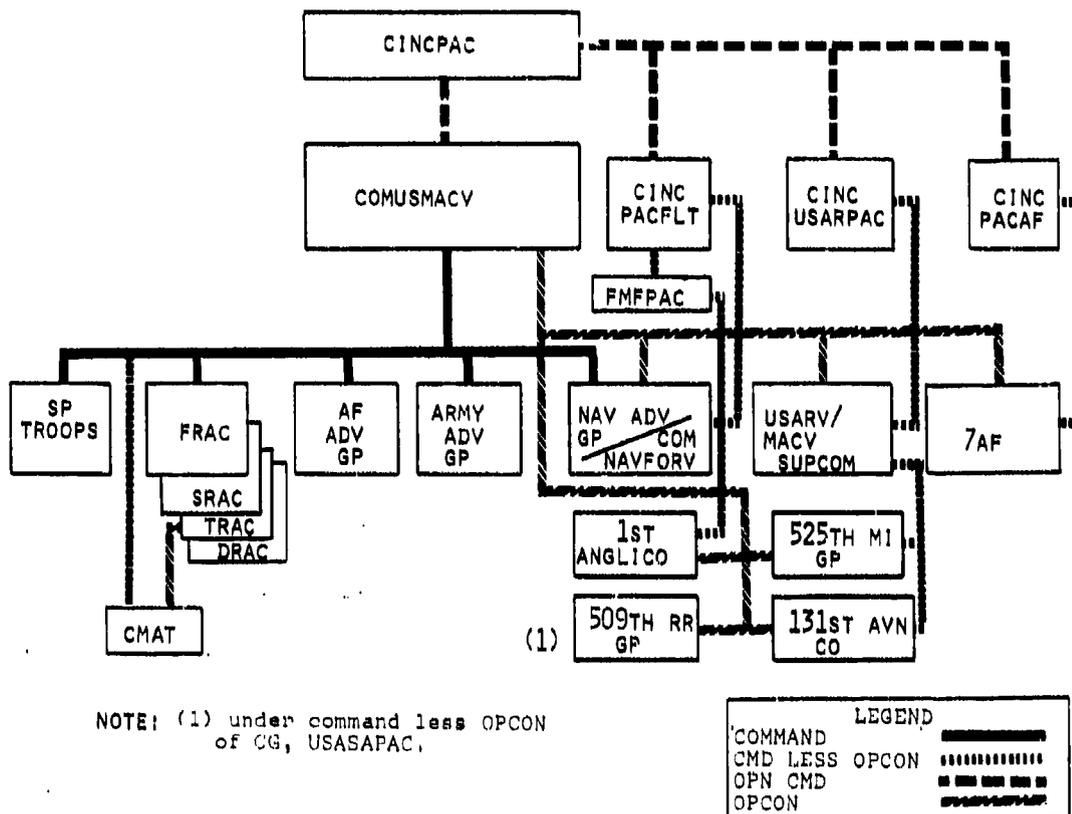
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MACV COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS



Source: MACV Directive 10-11

Figure: C-1

capacity, COMUSMACV is responsible directly to CINCPAC for coordination of matters of joint concern connected with the relationships among all personnel in the country area of concern who are under the jurisdiction of, or accountable to, the DOD on one hand, and the local people, local government officials, and American Ambassador on the other. The authority of COMUSMACV in such matters extends to all personnel, military or civilian, under the jurisdiction of or accountable to the DOD, regardless of whether or not they are assigned to the Pacific Command (PACOM). As single Senior Military Representative in the Republic of Vietnam, COMUSMACV serves as the military point of contact for and provides military support to the US Mission, Vietnam, as appropriate.⁷

FUNCTIONS OF COMUSMACV Command Responsibilities

(S) In 1972 COMUSMACV continued to exercise operational command of all assigned US military

forces and military agencies. Command relationships within MACV varied from direct command to coordination and cooperation (Fig. C-1). Specific command relationships were either determined by operational requirements or as needed to achieve objectives established by higher authority. The following extract of MACV Directive 10-11 defined COMUSMACV's responsibilities and functions as commander of a subordinate unified command:

RESPONSIBILITIES AND FUNCTIONS OF COMUSMACV

(S) COMUSMACV, as commander of a subordinate unified command:

(1) Exercises operational control of all US forces and military agencies assigned for the accomplishment of his missions.

(2) Consults with the American Ambassador on US political and basic policy matters. Divergent views between COMUSMACV and the American

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Ambassador will be reported to CINCPAC by COM-USMACV.

(3) Keeps the American Ambassador fully informed, especially concerning all high level contacts with officials of the Republic of Vietnam, and on major RVNAF military plans and pending operations.

(4) Plans for and is prepared to conduct military operations as directed by CINCPAC.

(5) Discharges US military responsibility to the Republic of Vietnam in accordance with CINCPAC policies and directives.

(6) Assists the Government of Vietnam and the RVNAF in planning for military operations.

(7) Develops coordinated US/Republic of Vietnam military plans as directed by CINCPAC.

(8) Establishes policies and procedures pertaining to the effective operation, maintenance, and management of communications-electronics facilities required for command and control. Administers and supervises joint frequency coordination, and processes and validates communications requirements in the Republic of Vietnam in accordance with PACOM communications-electronics instructions.

(9) Exercises coordinating authority over all US military intelligence and counter-intelligence units/elements operating in the Republic of Vietnam.

(10) Monitors research and development, test and evaluation, and combat developments (RDT&E and CD) activities of MACV Service Component Commanders in the Republic of Vietnam.

(11) To the extent agreed upon by the US and the countries concerned, controls and coordinates operations of third country military contingents and provides military and military assistance support therefore.

(12) Coordinates issuance of Army and Air Force Exchange privileges; controls identification procedures; determines common rationing policies; and coordinates merchandise control procedures in the Republic of Vietnam.

(13) Coordinates the development of labor provisions in the status of forces agreements or other major country-to-country agreements and forwards recommendations on such matters to CINCPAC.

(14) Represents the US forces position in formal discussions with the American Embassy and representatives of the Government of Vietnam on matters pertaining to the utilization of civilian employees in the Republic of Vietnam.^h

SEACoord Representative

(S) COMUSMACV, as CINCPAC in-country representative, provided military advice and information to the Coordinating Committee for US Missions, Southeast Asia (SEACoord). For SEACoord matters he:

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(1) Unless otherwise directed, represents CINCPAC at SEACoord meetings.

(2) Keeps CINCPAC and JCS informed on all aspects of SEACoord, including timely notification of agenda items and report of proceedings.^h
Military Assistance Functions.

(S) With the redeployment of the last US combat units in early 1972, and the assumption by RVNAF of primary combat responsibility (less strategic air), military assistance received additional emphasis as a major responsibility of COMUSMACV. According to the following extract from MACV Directive 10-11, COMUSMACV, for matters pertaining to military assistance:

(1) Is guided by the policies and procedures set forth in the Military Assistance Manual, the Foreign Assistance Act, applicable DOD directives and instructions, and such other directives as may be issued from time to time by appropriate authority.

(2) Makes recommendations to CINCPAC concerning military assistance to the Republic of Vietnam to include force structure modification of the RVNAF and the preparation and submission of the RVNAF Force Structure List (FSL).

(3) Develops military assistance plans and programs in cooperation with the Chief of the US Mission and other US Governmental agencies in the Mission and submits them to CINCPAC.

(4) Observes and reports on the utilization of materiel furnished and personnel trained by the US.

(5) Administers military sales transactions in accordance with current instructions.

(6) Provides appropriate advisory service and technical assistance to the Republic of Vietnam on military assistance.

(7) Makes recommendations to CINCPAC concerning off-shore procurement of military assistance materiel or services.

(8) Works directly with the military departments and appropriate military area commands on the development of arrangements for receipt and transfer of military assistance materiel, disposal of MAP/MASF excess property, and training and services in the Republic of Vietnam.

(9) Provides advice and assistance to the Republic of Vietnam with respect to the mutual weapons development program, weapons production, and off-shore procurement matters.

(10) Provides the point of contact for the Republic of Vietnam concerning the exchange of information on forces, budget, weapons, and capabilities.

(11) Provides liaison with the Republic of Vietnam with respect to any other military assistance requirements or logistical matters of the

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DOD and performs such other functions as may be required under foreign assistance legislation.

(12) With regard to the Republic of Vietnam implementation of that portion of its military program financed by other US agencies with US-owned local currency, develops and executes a program of review and observation to serve as a basis for reporting to the Chief of the US Mission and the Chief, US Agency for International Development (USAID), when the execution of the budget is not being carried out in accordance with the agreed to security budget and the terms of the covering agreement.

(13) Develops, manages, and controls the logistics programs for military assistance to Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and Regional Forces (RF)/Popular Forces (PF).

(14) Reviews and approves MAP programs developed for the ARVN by the Army Advisory Group (AAG), for the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) and the Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) by the Naval Advisory Group (NAG), and the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) by the Air Force Advisory Group (AFGP).

(15) Advises and assists the Republic of Vietnam in the organization and composition of its Armed Forces in accordance with approved combined strategy.

(16) Advises and assists the RVNAF in the logistics support of force development and operations as directed.

(17) Serves as the single point of contact for matters of interest to the Tripartite Deputies and provides liaison between the deputies and MACV, RVNAF and Forces Armees Nationales Khmeres (FANK) Joint Staff.¹⁰

Pacification Functions

(U) In 1972, as in 1971 and earlier, support of the Government of Vietnam pacification program was a major responsibility of COMUSMACV. Pacification support was stated in a new Four Year Community Defense and Development Plan (1972-1975) which was intended to be a logical evolution from the 1971 Community Defense and Local Development Plan (CDLD) and the Pacification and Development Plans of preceding years.¹¹

(S) The functions of COMUSMACV in regard to pacification were contained in paragraph 8d, MACV Directive 10-11, which is cited below:

8d. COMUSMACV is charged with US civil/military responsibility for support of pacification and development operations in the Republic of Vietnam under the overall authority of the American Ambassador. For pacification matters COMUSMACV:

(1) Develops and supervises the execution of

joint and combined plans, policies, concepts, and programs concerning US civil/military support for pacification and development.

(2) Provides advice and assistance to the Republic of Vietnam, including the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD), the RVNAF Joint General Staff (JGS), and other appropriate Government of Vietnam agencies on US civil/military support for pacification, including US advisory and logistics support.

(3) Develops requirements for military and civil assets (US/Free world (FW) and Government of Vietnam) to support pacification and development.

(4) Coordinates with the other agencies of the US Mission, Vietnam, in the planning of pacification and development activities.

(5) Provides focal point for economic warfare to include population and resource control, and for civic action by US forces.

(6) Evaluates civil/military pacification and development activities, including provision of security by US/FW/Government of Vietnam military forces, and reports on progress, status, and problems of the pacification and development support effort.¹²

US Mission Council Member

(C) An additional function of COMUSMACV was to sit as a permanent member of the US Mission Council which was presided over by the US Ambassador. The Council served as the means for coordination and cooperation by military and civilian agencies of the US Government in achieving national objectives in the Republic of Vietnam. As enumerated in paragraph 9, MACV Directive 10-11:

9. (C) UNITED STATES MISSION COUNCIL. The US Mission, consisting of the American Embassy, USMACV, USAID, US Information Service (USIS), and Office of the Special Assistant to the American Ambassador (OSA), has been established to implement programs to achieve US objectives in the Republic of Vietnam. While these US agencies respond to the direction of US agencies at the national level, local guidance is provided by a mission council that has been established to ensure an integrated US effort in the Republic of Vietnam. The council is composed of the American Ambassador (Chief); the Deputy Ambassador; COMUSMACV; Deputy to COMUSMACV for Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (DEPCORDS); Minister Counselor for Political Affairs; Director, US-AID; Minister Counselor for Economic Affairs; Director, USIS; Counselor for Administrative Affairs; Special Assistant for Press Affairs; and Director, OSA. The relationship between USMACV and the other elements of the mission team is one of

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coordination and cooperation. In case of differences of view between the Chief of Mission and COMUSMACV, each is free to communicate such differences to national authorities. COMUSMACV communications will be forwarded through CINCPAC.¹³

MACV SERVICE COMPONENT COMMANDERS

(C) According to MACV Directive 10-11, the commanders of the US Army, Navy, and Air Force components in Vietnam were:

(1) Army Component Commander: Commanding General, US Army, Vietnam (CG, USARV).

(2) Naval Component Commander: Commander, US Naval Forces, Vietnam (COMNAVFORV).

(3) Air Force Component Commander: Commander, 7th Air Force (CDR, 7AF).

(C) Coincident with the redeployment of US forces the number of common functions previously performed by each service component commander diminished. According to MACV Directive 10-11, CG, USARV; COMNAVFORV; and CDR, 7AF shared the following functions:

—Discharged component command functions for uni-service matters in Vietnam.

—Exercised operational control or commanded assigned and attached units.

—Provided logistical support for service peculiar items.

(C) With respect to logistics, administrative, technical, and other matters of uni-service interest, MACV service component commanders could receive instructions from and were authorized to communicate through unilateral service channels with their respective military service at PACOM level.¹⁴

1972 MACV SERVICE COMPONENT COMMANDS AND SUBORDINATE COMMANDS AND UNITS

(S) The redeployment of US ground combat units, decreasing force levels, and the transition to a pure advisory role resulted in the reorganization of MACV in May 1972. According to COMUSMACV OPLAN J-124, dated 25 June 1972, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam consisted of a HQ MACV, an Army Advisory Group (formerly MACV Training Directorate), a Naval Advisory Group, an Air Force Advisory Group, MACV Special Troops (formerly USAHAC and MACV HQ Commandant), small Regional Assistance Commands, a USARV/MACV Support Command, and US operating units assigned to COMUSMACV.

(S) The organization depicted in OPLAN J-214 focused on retention of command and control of the air war in Vietnam, the maintenance of a viable advisory effort in the training, technical, logistics, and pacification and development areas, and the flexibility to adapt to future redeployment actions at various force levels. Salient features included

the merger of HQ MACV and HQ 7AF to accommodate command and control of the air war and the establishment of an Army Advisory Group to facilitate the consolidation of Army-related advisory activities.¹⁵

(U) MACV Directive 10-11, dated 8 August 1972, listed the following service component commands, subordinate commands, subordinate units, and detachments:¹⁶

11a. US Army Vietnam/Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Support Command (USARV/MACVSUPCOM).

b. US Naval Forces, Vietnam (NAVFORV).

c. US Seventh Air Force (7AF).

d. First Regional Assistance Command (FRAC).

e. Second Regional Assistance Command (SRAC).

f. Third Regional Assistance Command (TRAC).

g. Delta Regional Assistance Command (DRAC).

h. MACV Special Troops (MACST).

i. US Army Advisory Group (AAG).

j. US Naval Advisory Group (NAG).

k. US Air Force Advisory Group (AFGP).

l. 525th Military Intelligence Group.

m. 508th Radio Research Group.

n. Sub-Unit One, First Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (1st ANGLICO).

o. 131st Aviation Company (AS).

p. Capital Military Assistance Team (CMAT).

q. Vietnam Regional Exchange.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS OF COMPONENT COMMANDS, SUBORDINATE COMMANDS, AND ATTACHED UNITS OF USMACV CG, USARV/MACVSUPCOM

(C) USARV/MACVSUPCOM, with assigned and attached units, was assigned to Headquarters, US Army, Pacific (USARPAC) with station in South Vietnam. CINCUSARPAC exercised command less operational control of USARV. COMUSMACV exercised operational control of USARV/MACVSUPCOM. According to MACV Directive 10-11, the CG USARV/MACVSUPCOM will:

(1) Discharge Army component command functions for uni-service Army matters in Vietnam.

(2) Advise COMUSMACV on US Army combat, combat support, and combat service support matters.

(3) Provide COMUSMACV with US Army forces for the conduct of combat and combat support operations in Vietnam.

(4) Command assigned or attached US Army units and US Army developed bases and facilities in Vietnam as directed by COMUSMACV.

(5) Keep CINCUSARPAC informed of all US Army component functions performed in support of COMUSMACV.

(6) Direct and supervise the US Army logistics support system (less theater traffic management

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functions which remain with COMUSMACV) in Vietnam. In addition to common supply, common service support of all types for US advisors and FWMAF, and US Army peculiar support throughout Vietnam, support of other US military services, agencies, and contractors is provided on a common service or cross-service basis as specified in current applicable or future interservice support agreements.

(7) Perform base development as directed of ports, beaches, depots, air bases, landlines of communication, and major installations in the military regions except for bases/facilities assigned to other services.

(8) Conduct US Army component planning to support COMUSMACV operation plans.

(9) Provide administrative, logistics, and service support to Headquarters, MACV, and other activities, as directed.

(10) Coordinate real estate functions and activities of all US forces and FWMAF in the military regions as directed.

(11) Perform the functions of US area coordinator in Vietnam as provided for in MACV Directive 10-4.

(12) Be prepared to execute contingency plans as directed by COMUSMACV.

(13) Provide communications and navigation facilities as required in the military regions, and provide communications support to the US military advisors, to ARVN units, VNN, FWMAF, and the RAC organization as directed.

(14) Provide intelligence and counterintelligence support to COMUSMACV as directed.

(15) Perform manpower authorization and personnel functions for assigned US Army units as directed by CINCPACAF.¹⁷

CDR, 7AF

(C) 7AF with assigned and attached units was assigned to Headquarters, Pacific Air Force (PACAF). CINCPACAF exercised command less operational control of 7AF elements stationed in the Republic of Vietnam. COMUSMACV exercised operational control of 7AF. Logistics support was provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM except for service peculiar items which were provided from its own service resources. According to paragraph 12c, MACV Directive 10-11, CDR 7AF will:

(1) Exercise command and direction of all tactical, tactical support, base support, and training units assigned or attached to 7AF.

(2) Serve as Air Force component commander for COMUSMACV and discharge Air Force component commander functions for uni-service Air Force matters in the Republic of Vietnam.

(3) Serve as Deputy COMUSMACV.

(4) Conduct and coordinate offensive and defensive

air operations, tactical airlift, air traffic control, search and rescue operations, close air support, and reconnaissance operations, and provide communications and navigational facilities as required.

(5) Exercise mission direction of MACV tactical air assets, including available reconnaissance aircraft, to provide close air support and reconnaissance for operations conducted in the Republic of Vietnam, in accordance with MACV Directive 85-4 (C) and other areas as directed.

(6) Exercise operational control of FWMAF units designated by COMUSMACV.

(7) Coordinate all military air operations in the USMACV area of responsibility, including those of US, FWMAF, and VNAF units which were not assigned or attached to 7AF.

(8) Function as air defense commander and exercise overall air defense responsibility within the Republic of Vietnam and other areas as directed. Authority exercised over USARV air defense resources will be specified in MACV Directive 85-4 (C) and 85-8 (C).

(9) Conduct US Air Force component planning and be responsible for overall air planning to support COMUSMACV operation plans for current or proposed operations.

(10) Provide weather and aerial port services for COMUSMACV through attached units.

(11) Coordinate real estate functions and activities for all US forces and FWMAF on air bases where 7AF had primary mission requirements.

(12) Perform manpower authorization and personnel functions for assigned US units in Vietnam as directed by CINCPACAF.

(13) Keep CINCPACAF informed of all US Air Force component functions performed in support of COMUSMACV.

(14) Provide intelligence and counterintelligence support as directed by COMUSMACV for purposes of target development/assessment in support of air/ground operations or campaign planning.

(15) Be prepared to execute contingency plans as directed by COMUSMACV.

(16) Perform RDT&E and CE.

(17) Provide logistic support to FWMAF in accordance with established agreements.

(18) Perform airfield maintenance for assigned air bases.

(19) On even numbered fiscal years, assume the chairmanship of the JVREC, and with the CG, USARV/MACVSUPCOM, be responsible for mission evaluation, command supervision, and support (to include logistical and administrative support) of Vietnam Regional Exchange activities.¹⁸

Regional Assistance Commands (RAC)

(U) By early 1972 RACs had replaced previous

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US corps and division headquarters as senior headquarters in each of the Vietnamese military regions, signifying the end of the US combat role in the Republic of Vietnam. In Military Region 1, First Regional Assistance Command (FRAC) replaced XXIV Corps on 19 March 1972. In Military Region 2, Second Regional Assistance Group (SRAG) was redesignated SRAC on 13 June 1972 following the death of Mr. John Paul Vann and his replacement by BG Michael D. Healy. Earlier, on 30 April 1972, II Field Force, Vietnam had been replaced by Third Regional Assistance Command (TRAC) in Military Region 3, while in late 1969 the Delta Military Assistance Command (DMAC) was established as the last US forces withdrew from IV Corps/Military Region 4. DMAC was redesignated the Delta Regional Assistance Command (DRAC) on 30 April 1971.

(U) The senior US representative in each RAC functioned as senior advisor to the Vietnamese corps commander and exercised operational control over forces designated by COMUSMACV. He was also responsible for CORDS operations in the military region.¹⁹

(C) The functions of the CGs of the RACs as stated in MACV Directive 10-11 were: *Regional Assistance Commands (RAC) are assigned to Headquarters, USMACV. Logistical support is provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM and as outlined in current joint directives. CG, FRAC, SRAC, TRAC, and DRAC will:*

(1) *Serve as the US Senior Advisor to CG of the RVNAF Corps/Military Region (MR).*

(2) *Serve as CG of the Army Support Element of the MR.*

(3) *Exercise command of the province advisory teams (PAT), of the corps troop advisors (CTA), and division assistance teams (DAT).*

(4) *Exercise operational control of US units designated by COMUSMACV.*

(5) *Conduct, in coordination with CG of the RVNAF corps/MR, US unilateral, combined US/FWMAF, and combined US/FWMAF/RVNAF combat operations.*

(6) *Provide for security for designated critical US and Republic of Vietnam installations in the MR.*

(7) *Be prepared to execute contingency plans as directed by COMUSMACV.*

(8) *Provide intelligence and counterintelligence as directed by COMUSMACV.*

(9) *Provide advice, assistance, and support to the RVNAF at corps, division/special zone, province, and district levels in planning and executing coordinated pacification and development projects.*

(10) *Provide assistance to the RVNAF corps/MR in developing and maintaining an effective military*

capability by advising and supporting RVNAF military and paramilitary commanders and staffs at all levels in operations, intelligence, psychological operations, personnel management, and combat support and combat service support activities.

(11) *Assist and advise in the formulation and execution of all plans, policies, and programs which support pacification and development in the MR, to include civic action by US units.*

(12) *Develop, in coordination with CG of the RVNAF corps/MR, recommendations for ARVN materiel, personnel, and organizational requirements in the MR and submit to COMUSMACV.*

(13) *Develop recommendations for materiel, personnel, and organizational requirements for RF/FF and paramilitary forces in the MR and submit to COMUSMACV.*

(14) *Observe and report to COMUSMACV on the utilization of materiel furnished and personnel trained by the US in the MR area of responsibility.*

(15) *Assist the RVNAF by coordinating the use of available US support assets in each corps/MR.*

(16) *Provide accurate and timely reports of RVNAF operations.*

(17) *Perform zone coordination functions as directed by the area coordinator in accordance with MACV Directive 10-4.²⁰*

(C) The Capital Military Advisory Team (CMAT) was under the command less operational control of COMUSMACV; CG, TRAC exercised operational control. Administrative and personnel reports and requirements followed command channels. USARV/MACVSUPCOM provided logistics support. The Commanding Officer, CMAT was responsible for missions and tasks assigned by CG, TRAC. MACV Directive 10-11 stated that the Commanding Officer, CMAT, will:

(1) *Advise and assist the Military Governor of Saigon and the Commanding General, Capital Military District (CMD), with particular emphasis on the effective defense and security of Saigon.*

(2) *Exercise operational control over all US advisors to military and paramilitary forces within CMD (to include Territorial Forces, PSDF, and police) in matters related to the defense of the Capital. Exercise command and control over advisors to ARVN units assigned to CMD.*

(3) *Establish and maintain effective liaison and coordination with all forces and installations in CMD (US and ARVN) to ensure a coordinated plan for the defense and security of the Capital.²¹*

Army Advisory Group (AAG)

(C) Army Advisor Group (AAG) was assigned to Headquarters, MACV. However, by mutual agreement the normal command functions of personnel

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administration and military discipline were accomplished through designated service channels, with liaison being maintained between AAG and Headquarters, MACV. All logistics support was provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM. The Chief, AAG will:

(1) Exercise command of subordinate advisory teams.

(2) Advise and assist the ARVN in achieving a state of combat readiness through application of proper techniques, procedures, and training.

(3) Advise and assist the ARVN in the conduct of combat operations through US advisors directly under the command of AAG less those OPCON to the RAC.

(4) Develop, in coordination with the JGS, recommendations for ARVN personnel and organizational requirements within their cognizance and submit to COMUSMACV for approval.

(5) Develop, in coordination with the ARVN, recommendations for ARVN materiel requirements.

(6) Provide advice and assistance to the Central Training Command in the development of an effective military training system for ARVN, to include evolving doctrine and training literature, annual training ammunition requirements, training budget, and facilities development programming.

(7) Plan, prepare, and execute the Army portion of the military assistance training program.

(8) Observe and report to COMUSMACV on the utilization of materiel furnished and personnel trained by the US by reports from advisors under command of AAG less those under OPCON to the RAC.

(9) Exercise coordinating authority over the MACV advisory effort on all joint service training matters.

(10) Coordinate all training matters involving combined/joint US, FWMAF, and RVNAF participation.

(11) Coordinate and conduct as directed third country training within the RVN.

(12) Serve as MACV proponent agency for RVNAF on-the-job training programs. ²²

Naval Advisory Group (NAG)

(C) The Naval Advisory Group (NAG) was assigned to Headquarters, MACV. By mutual agreement the normal command functions of personnel administration and military discipline were accomplished through designated service channels, with liaison being maintained between NAG and Headquarters, MACV. Common supply and common service support was provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM, except service peculiar items which were provided by NAVFORV. Chief, NAG served as Senior US Advisor to the Chief of Naval Operations, VNN and to the Commandant of the VNMC. According to

MACV Directive 10-11, paragraph 12f., Chief, NAG will:

(1) Exercise command of all units and elements, including the Marine Advisory Unit, of the Naval Advisory Group.

(2) Advise and assist the VNN and VNMC in achieving a state of combat readiness through application of proper techniques, procedures, and training.

(3) Advise and assist the VNN and VNMC in the conduct of combat operations through US advisors directly under the command of CH, NAG.

(4) Develop, in coordination with the VNN and VNMC, recommendations for VNN and VNMC personnel and organizational requirements and submit to COMUSMACV for approval.

(5) Develop, in coordination with the VNN and VNMC, recommendations for VNN and VNMC materiel requirements.

(6) Develop the MASF Program for VNN and VNMC and submit to COMUSMACV for review and approval.

(7) Manage and control the logistics program for military assistance and service peculiar items to VNN and VNMC, coordinating with other USMACV subordinate commanders and staff elements as appropriate.

(8) Observe and report to COMUSMACV on the utilization of materiel furnished and personnel trained by the US.

(9) Advise and assist the VNN and VNMC in military support of pacification and development to include psychological operations.

(10) Coordinate all pacification and development program activities with CORDS advisors. ²³

Air Force Advisory Group (AFGP)

(C) As were the other advisory groups, AFGP was assigned to Headquarters, MACV. Similarly, by mutual agreement the normal command functions of personnel administration and military discipline were accomplished through designated service channels, with liaison being maintained between AFGP and Headquarters, MACV. Logistics support was provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM, except for service peculiar items which were provided by the Air Force component commander. Paragraph 12g., MACV Directive 10-11, defined the functions of the Chief, AFGP as follows:

12g. The Chief, AFGP, will:

(1) Exercise command of subordinate advisory teams and operational control of designated units and detachments.

(2) Advise and assist the VNAF in achieving a state of combat readiness through application of proper techniques, procedures, and training.

(3) Advise and assist the VNAF in the conduct of combat operations.

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(4) Develop, in coordination with the VNAF, recommendations for VNAF personnel and organizational requirements and submit to COMUSMACV for approval.

(5) Develop, in coordination with the VNAF, recommendations for VNAF materiel requirements.

(6) Develop the MASF program for VNAF and submit to COMUSMACV for review and approval.

(7) Manage and control the logistics program for military assistance and service peculiar items to VNAF, coordinating with other USMACV subordinate commanders and staff elements as appropriate.

(8) Observe and report to COMUSMACV on the utilization of materiel furnished and personnel trained by the US.

(9) Advise and assist the VNAF in military support of pacification and development, to include psychological warfare.

(10) Coordinate all pacification and development activities with CORDS advisors.

(11) Provide intelligence and counterintelligence to COMUSMACV and VNAF.²⁴

MACV Special Troops (MACST)

(C) MACST was established 1 January 1972 using assets of the US Army Headquarters Area Command (USAHAC) and the Headquarters Commandant, MACV. It was assigned to, and under the command of, COMUSMACV. MACST activities were under the supervision of the Chief of Staff, MACV. MACV and USARV staff elements channeled missions and requirements through the Chief of Staff, MACV. Operational control was exercised by CG, TRAC for matters pertaining to defense and security. The functions of MACV Headquarters Commandant were assigned to MACST. USARV/MACVSUPCOM provided logistics support. MACV Directive 10-11, paragraph 12h., stated that CG, MACST will:

(1) Provide administrative, logistical, and limited personnel services support to US and FWMAF forces in the greater metropolitan Saigon area, less USAF activities on Tan Son Nhut Air Base, but including the MACV complex.

(2) Act as the Sub-Zone Coordinator for all matters except defense against external attack for the greater metropolitan Saigon area, less USAF activities on Tan Son Nhut Air Base, but including the MACV complex.

(3) Execute the area coordination responsibilities assigned in MACV Directive 10-4.

(4) Exercise military justice responsibilities in accordance with MACV Directive 27-3 and pertinent general orders.

(5) Serve as Commander, US Army Element, Headquarters, MACV.²⁵

525th Military Intelligence Group

(C) The 525th Military Intelligence Group was assigned to Headquarters, USARV. USARV exercised command less operational control. COMUSMACV exercised operational control through the Director of Intelligence. USARV/MACVSUPCOM provided logistics support. The Commanding Officer, 525th Military Intelligence Group will:

(1) Exercise command of subordinate units.

(2) Exercise supervision of and support for the US Army intelligence effort as directed by COMUSMACV.

(3) Provide intelligence and counterintelligence support as directed by COMUSMACV.

(4) Provide the US Army component elements to combined US/ARVN intelligence document, exploitation, and interrogation activities.²⁶

509th Radio Research Group

(C) The 509th Radio Research Group was assigned to US Army Security Agency, Pacific (USASAPAC). USASAPAC exercised command less operational control. COMUSMACV exercised operational control through the Director of Intelligence. USARV/MACVSUPCOM provided logistics support. The Commanding Officer 509th Radio Research Group, provided COMUSMACV communications security, and electronic warfare support under provisions of AR 10-122.²⁷

Sub-Unit One, 1st ANGLICO

(C) Sub-Unit One, 1st ANGLICO, FMFPAC was under the operational control of COMUSMACV. CG, FMFPAC, exercised command less operational control. Administrative and supply support was provided by USARV/MACVSUPCOM and NAVFORV, as arranged separately. Marine Corps supply channels provided support for Marine Corps peculiar equipment. According to paragraph 12k., MACV Directive 10-11, Sub-Unit One, 1st ANGLICO will:

(1) Provide Headquarters, MACV, US Army, RVNAF, and FWMAF advice and assistance in planning, coordinating, and employing naval gunfire support ships assigned for support of in-country forces and perform such other duties as directed by COMUSMACV.

(2) Provide personnel to plan, coordinate, and control naval gunfire support for all forces, as directed by COMUSMACV.²⁸

131st Aviation Company (AS)

(C) The 131st Aviation Company (AS) was assigned to Headquarters, USARV. USARV exercised command less operational control. COMUSMACV exercised operational control through the Director of Intelligence. USARV/MACVSUPCOM provided

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logistics support. The Commanding Officer, 131st Aviation Company (AS) will:

(1) Provide visual, photographic, infrared, and side looking airborne radar surveillance and other missions as directed by COMUSMACV.

(2) Provide imagery interpretation reports on all missions.

(3) Provide weekly intelligence summary.⁸⁹

Vietnam Regional Exchange

(U) The Vietnam Regional Exchange was under the command less operational control of Headquarters, Pacific Exchange System (PACEX). Operational control was exercised by COMUSMACV through CG, USARV, and CDR, 7AF, who provided command supervision and support through the Joint Vietnam Regional Exchange Council (JVREC). The chairmanship of the JVREC was with the CG, USARV, during even numbered fiscal years. MACV Directive 10-11 stated the Vietnamese Regional Exchange will:

(1) Provide merchandise and services of necessity and convenience, not furnished from federal appropriations, to authorized patrons at uniformly low prices.

(2) Generate reasonable earnings for the support of military welfare and recreational programs.

(3) Provide an exchange service responsive to all FWMAF in the Republic of Vietnam.⁹⁰

RVNAF and FWMAF Relationships

(S) COMUSMACV generally exercised operational control over FWMAF while command less operational control remained with the contributing country. An exception was the Republic of Korea Forces, Vietnam (ROKRV), whose relationship was that of coordination and cooperation.⁹¹ The relation of MACV to RVNAF and FWMAF was defined in paragraph 13, MACV Directive 10-11, cited below:

13. (C) RELATIONSHIPS OF UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM — REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES — AND OTHER FREE WORLD MILITARY ASSISTANCE FORCES, VIETNAM.

a. National Level. The relationship between COMUSMACV and Chief, JGS, RVNAF, is one of

coordination and cooperation. Each commander retains operational control of his respective national forces. Under this arrangement, RVNAF retains all territorial responsibilities.

b. Subordinate Level.

(1) The basic concept underlying command relationships between US/FWMAF/RVNAF is one of mission accomplishment through mutual support, coordination, and cooperation. Components or units of one nation's military force may be placed under the operational control of a military commander of different national origin only if a military working agreement between the two nations concerned provides for such control. However, when the circumstances of the tactical situation require a combined operation involving the forces of two nations, the commanders of the forces involved may agree to a direct support relationship, as defined in JCS Publication 1.

(2) As a matter of policy, US forces will not be placed under the command or operational control of allied commanders. However, this restriction does not preclude temporary direction of US forces by RVNAF commanders or the temporary tactical direction of RVNAF or FWMAF by US commanders under certain circumstances. Such direction includes designation of targets or objectives, timing, duration of the supporting action, and other instructions necessary for coordination and for efficiency. The tactics, methods, and procedures to be employed should be based on mutual agreement. Matters of this nature which cannot be resolved by subordinate US commanders will be referred to COMUSMACV.

(3) National unit integrity will be maintained at all levels.

(4) USMACV advisory teams at all echelons perform the combat liaison function between the US, FWMAF, and RVNAF in addition to their primary mission of advice, assistance, and operational support of RVNAF.

c. Release of US Military Information. Release of US military information to representatives of the Republic of Vietnam will be made only in accordance with disclosure authority directives.⁹²

IMPROVING THE RVNAF FORCE STRUCTURE

BACKGROUND

(C) The Consolidated RVNAF Improvement and Modernization Program (CRIMP) evolved in several stages from a basic plan submitted by MACV in May 1968. CRIMP was designed to provide an improved balance of RVNAF combat forces with an increased capability in the areas of firepower, tactical mobility, and logistical support. Planning

factors outlined in a CINCPAC message of 28 November 1969 resulted in the establishment of a combined MACV/RVNAF Joint General Staff (JGS) Improvement and Modernization Planning Committee. The key factor influencing the action of the committee was guidance from the US Secretary of Defense that the objective of Vietnamization was the progressive transfer of increased combat

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responsibility to the government of Vietnam. The committee provided recommendations concerning South Vietnamese force structure increase proposals which were presented by President Thieu to COMUSMACV and Ambassador Bunker on 12 January 1970. Implementation of the proposals included phasing of RVNAF requirements over the FY 71-73 time frame, considering availability and complexities of equipment and the extensive lead time required for training in certain skills.⁸³

(S) The following programs and associated RVNAF force ceilings were subsequently approved by the US Secretary of Defense.⁸⁴

PROGRAM	DATE APPROVED	FORCE CEILINGS
Program I	23 OCT 68	801,215
Program I Modified	1 NOV 68	850,000
Program II	18 DEC 68	855,594
Program IIA	28 APR 69	875,790
Program II Midway	19 AUG 69	958,773
Program II Accelerated	6 JAN 70	968,360
Program III (CRIMP)	5 JUN 70	1,078,315 (FY 71) 1,092,087 (FY 72) 1,100,000 (FY 73)

FY 73 FORCE STRUCTURE PLANNING Force Structure Review

(TS) In October 1971 CINCPAC asked MACV to review the FY 73 RVNAF force structure to ensure that RVNAF would have the necessary forces to replace the planned redeployment of US and free world forces. Within the 1.1 million manpower level, MACV was asked to address such areas as providing RVNAF an interdiction capability, reinforcing Military Regions 1 and 2, developing an air cavalry capability, increasing the medium lift helicopter capability, and increasing the amount of self-propelled artillery. Also to be considered were faster activation of units, improvements in command and control, leadership and morale, logistics, individual and unit training, and assessment of the manpower resources capability to maintain the 1.1 million man force level. Interdiction was of paramount importance; comments were requested on new and improved methods of interdiction, expanded sensor/radar capability for delivery and readout, additional AC-119 aircraft, a mini-gunship concept, and modification of the A-37 for interdiction.⁸⁵

(TS) The FY 73 Force Structure Review was approved by COMUSMACV on 12 January 1972 and presented to CINCPAC by a MACV briefing team on 15 January 1972. The review was approved by

CINCPAC on 21 January and by JCS on 18 February.

Force Structure Recommendations

(TS) The following were the important capabilities added to the RVNAF force structure as a result of the review:

—Reinforcement of Military Region 1 with the newly created 3d ARVN Infantry Division and the 20th Tank Regiment.

—Three additional High Endurance Cutters (WHEC) to enhance the VNN reaction role in coastal surveillance.

—Provision of a significant interdiction capability for the VNAF to include a maritime air patrol of eight additional aircraft, conversion of one C-47 squadron to an AC-47 gunship squadron, and the addition of a forward looking infrared sensor (FLIR) maintenance capability.

—Five squadrons of short take-off and landing (STOL) aircraft and 50 photo intelligence personnel to permit swift exploitation of acquired targets.

—Transfer of the Song Than Base to the VNMC from the US 1st Infantry Division.

—Formation of 41 Regional Force group headquarters (three in Military Region 1, three in Military Region 2, five in Military Region 3, and 30 in Military Region 4) to provide command and control elements to add flexibility to the employment of Regional Force companies.

—Formation of seven Regional Force battalion headquarters to provide command and control elements in Military Region 1 to increase the responsiveness and flexibility of Regional Force companies.

—131 additional Regional Force companies (28 in Military Region 1, ten in Military Region 2, 17 in Military Region 3, 76 in Military Region 4) to improve pacification coverage and to assume many of the missions previously performed by US and free world units.

—Establishment of the National Materiel Management Agency (NMMA) to provide a centralized computer center for logistical administration and management of RVNAF ammunition and equipment.⁸⁶

Force Structure Changes

(S) The NGUYEN HUE Offensive brought about acceleration of the CRIMP in terms of Project ENHANCE units. As the possibility of a cease-fire increased during the year, CRIMP was completed and additive equipment was provided by Project ENHANCE PLUS. In order to assimilate these changes plus the changes approved by the FY 73 Force Structure Review, it was necessary to determine where a manpower trade-off could be made in order to permit RVNAF to remain within the 1.1 million

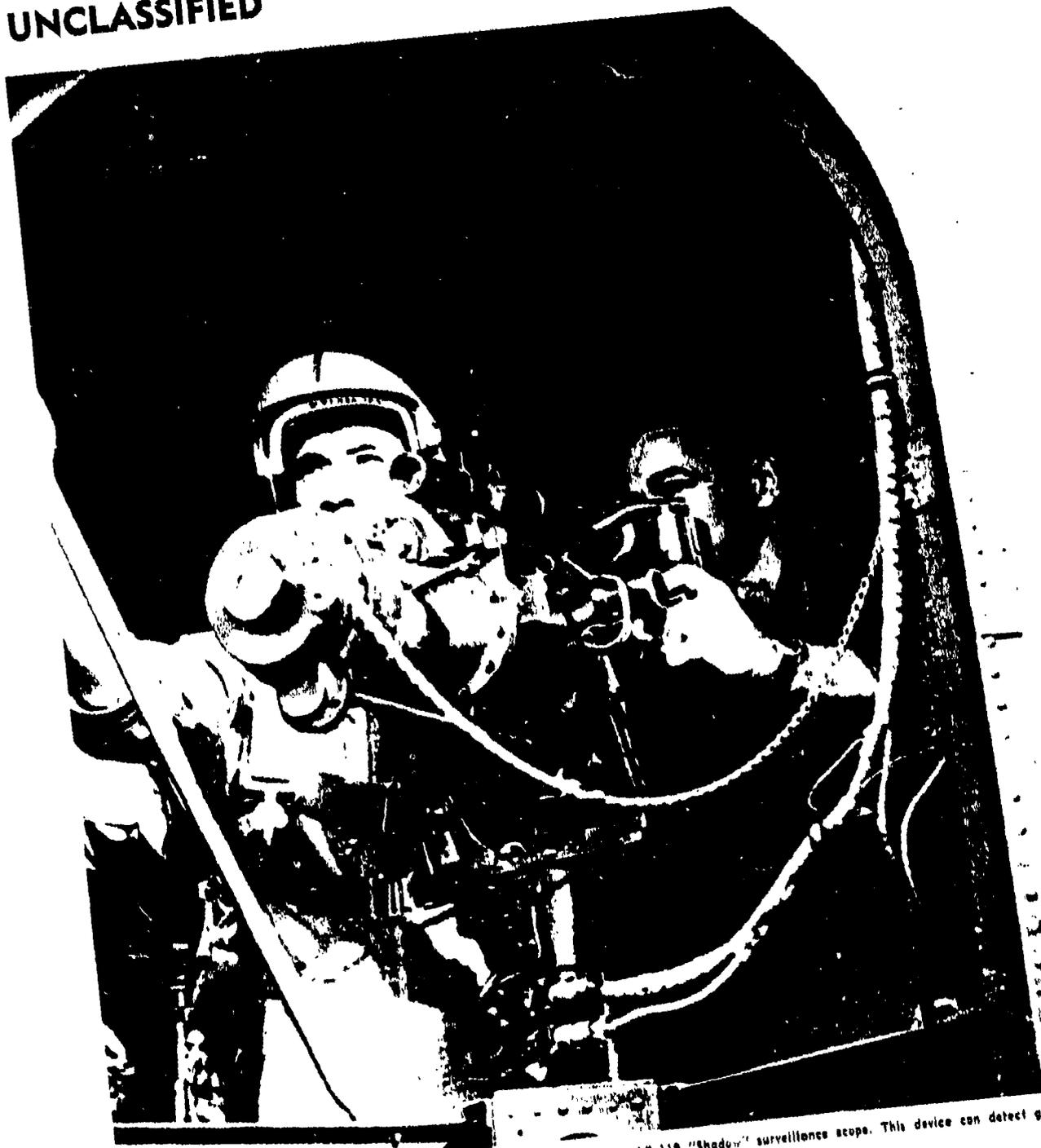
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CPT Joseph L. Hill (right) shows LT Tanh Hoang Nguyen how to operate the AC-119 "Shadow" surveillance scope. This device can detect ground activity day or night.

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man level. Pending resolution of this question, COMUSMACV requested a temporary increase of 16,905 spaces, the total divided as follows:⁸⁷

RVN	450,367
VNN	40,981
VNAF	14,245
VNMC	61,458
RF	307,107
PF	242,802

TOTAL 1,116,905

(TS) In March JCS approved the request with the proviso that actual RVNAF manning could not exceed 1.1 million.⁸⁸ CINCPAC tasked MACV in May to identify 16,905 spaces which could be given up within the RVNAF.⁸⁹ On 19 June MACV responded, proposing Popular Force spaces be reduced, subject to a possible reevaluation in the future.

(TS) Also included in the COMUSMACV 19 June 1972 message were force structure change proposals affecting the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) and the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF):

—VNN proposed inactivation of one river assault group, two river interdiction divisions, and reduction of 273 viper craft spaces to provide a total of 703 manpower spaces to accommodate the increase of three high endurance cutters (WHEC), activation of a third flotilla headquarters, and increased security for 15 existing radar sites.

—VNAF proposed utilization of 4,100 manpower spaces originally programmed for the short take-off and landing (STOL) program as trade-offs to accommodate direct support of additional aircraft, base security support, improved undergraduate training, activation of a pilot survival school, and activation of the 6th Air Division. The decision to use the STOL spaces was prompted by repeated COMUSMACV statements that there was no military requirement for the aircraft and the results cited in the interim operational test and evaluation report for the STOL aircraft.⁴⁰ On 3 July 1972 JCS:

—Approved, for planning purposes, elimination of the 16,905 Popular Force spaces.

—Approved the 703 manpower space trade-offs for VNN.

—Approved, for planning purposes, the 4,100 manpower space trade-off for VNAF, pending final decision on the STOL program. Additionally, JCS requested that MACV provide corresponding non-STOL trade-offs on an alternate basis for the 4,100 VNAF spaces and a complete report of all organizational changes required to support Project ENHANCE, including space increases and recommended changes by fiscal year.⁴¹ On 28 July 1972 COMUSMACV responded to the JCS request, re-

capping the Project ENHANCE requirements and identifying the additional manpower space exchanges required (Fig. C-2).⁴²

(TS) In reviewing the entire situation, the JGS nominated the following exchanges to cover the adjustments required for the RVNAF ceiling, the VNAF non-STOL manpower spaces, and the increased manpower requirements to meet Project ENHANCE:

—To meet the 1.1 million FY 73 ceilings:

Inactivation of 554 Popular Force platoons	16,066
Decrease in the Popular Force pipeline	839
	<hr/>
	16,905

—To meet the VNAF non-STOL spaces (4,100) and the Project ENHANCE increases (5,146):

Further decrease in Popular Force pipeline	1,576
Decrease in Regional Force pipeline	880
Decrease in ARVN pipeline	2,607
Decrease in VNAF pipeline	65
Inactivation of an additional 142 Popular Force platoons	4,118

TOTAL	9,246
TOTAL trade-offs	26,151

(TS) MACV and JGS exchanged many letters concerning additive equipment, accelerated delivery of previously approved equipment, and rapid identification of trade-off spaces to provide manpower for operation and support of the equipment. The expedient solution was to gain spaces from a reduction of Popular Force and pipeline spaces. COMUSMACV suggested to the Chief, JGS, that other alternatives be explored. The 28 July COMUSMACV message requested CINCPAC/JCS accept the trade-off proposals for planning purposes only, pending the results of a joint JGS/MACV force structure review.

The 8/72 Committee

(S) A combined JGS/MACV committee was formed in August 1972 to identify trade-off spaces to support Project ENHANCE and other new requirements. The committee, named the 8/72 Committee by JGS, initially reviewed over 18,000 candidate spaces presented by RVNAF agencies and commands as their lower priority workloads and related spaces. JGS employed the method of requesting each RVNAF agency/command to identify 10 percent (central agencies/headquarters) or 5 percent (other units except combat units which were exempt) of their total spaces and submit them

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PROJECT ENHANCE STRENGTH REQUIREMENTS

VNAF	SPACES	VNN	SPACES
32 UH-1	**	3 WHEC	**
5 F-5A	85		
2 A-37 Sqdns	*	ARVN	
12 RC-47	*	3 175mm Arty Bns	1,872
1 AC-119K Sqdn	*	2 M-48 Tank Bns	1,874
1 EC-47 Sqdn	*	2 ADA Bns	898
1 C-7 Sqdn	*	TOW	630
1 C-119G Sqdn	**		
2 CG-47 Sqdns	307***	TOTAL Project ENHANCE	
		Spaces Required	5,148

*Manpower requirements established in FY 73 RVNAF Force Structure.

**Manpower requirements addressed in the 19 June COMUSMACV Message. For the C-119G Squadron (Maritime Patrol), 300 spaces had been previously approved and an additional 138 spaces had been requested on 19 June.

***459 spaces for the first CH-47 squadron had been requested on 19 June; this message identified an additional 307 spaces for the second squadron.

Source: MACDO

Figure: C-2

to the combined committee for review. The final result was identification of over 12,000 trade-off spaces.

(S) The trade-off spaces were obtained in two phases. The initial phase (6,198 spaces) was implemented on 27 October 1972 by JGS Order 4964 with inactivation or reduction of affected units effective 1 November 1972. The intent was to provide these spaces for Project ENHANCE units. The balance would be held in reserve for future requirements.

(S) The primary purpose of forming the 8/72 Committee was to preclude continued employment of Popular Forces spaces as trade-offs. The process took three months and provided a disciplined means for JGS to impress the need for resource management on the participating agencies and to indicate that the spaces were centrally controlled by JGS. However, Project ENHANCE PLUS required expeditious identification of trade-off spaces to support new units. This required implementation of Phase II reductions and identification of further trade-off spaces. The immediate source identified by JGS was a further reduction of Popular Forces spaces. Initial estimates for VNAF Project ENHANCE PLUS requirements, based on previous aircraft utilization rates and crew ratios, would have resulted in a requirement for an additional 68 Popular Force platoons (inactivation of these 68 platoons along with Phase II reductions were implemented on 22 November 1972 by JGS Order 5460 effective 1 December 1972). However, after a comprehensive reevaluation of all VNAF aircraft utilization rates and crew ratios, the initial estimate was reduced by over 3,000 spaces thereby providing the capability for meeting other FY 73 immediate requirements and FY 74 requirements. Further, it provided the means for reducing the additional 68 Popular Force platoons (1,914 spaces)

to a requirement of 17 platoons (498 spaces of which 25 spaces remained in the Popular Force pipeline).

(S) A recap of Phases I and II is as follows:

SERVICE	PHASE I SPACES
ARVN	3,165
VNAF	475
VNN	818
VNMC	0
Regional Force	1,787
Popular Force	0
TOTAL	6,198
SERVICE	PHASE II SPACES
ARVN	4,024
VNAF	1,240
VNN	880
VNMC	0
Regional Force	210
Popular Force	1,914
TOTAL	7,768

(S) The 16,905 spaces (approximately 588 Popular Force platoons), that were identified and approved for inactivation to reduce the RVNAF authorized ceiling to 1.1 million, were to be inactivated on a phased basis from March 1973 through 30 June 1973. Figure C-3 is a recapitulation of RVNAF FY 73 authorized strengths.⁴⁵

LONG RANGE RVNAF FORCE STRUCTURE PLAN

(U) MACDO had the responsibility within MACV for the development of the RVNAF force structure, for the preparation of the MACV input to the CINCPAC Military Assistance and Sales Plan, and for the Joint Strategic Objective Plan. To effectively discharge these responsibilities it was appropriate that a long range force structure plan for RVNAF

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RVNAF AUTHORIZED STRENGTHS, FY 73

	APPROVED CRIMP*	FY 73 CHANGES	FY 73 ADJUSTED STRENGTHS
ARVN	450,387	+398***	450,780**
VNAF	61,453	+3,054	64,507
VNN	40,931	-1,189	39,742
VNMC	14,245	+157	14,402
Regional Force	307,107	+17,454	324,561
Popular Force	242,802	-36,774****	206,028
TOTALS	1,116,905	-16,905	1,100,000

* Includes temporary above ceiling authorization of 16,905 spaces.

** Includes 1,807 awaiting distribution for FY 74 and pending requirements: FY 73 strength is 448,985.

*** Actual change excluding 1,807 spaces above (at **) is -1,414.

**** Includes 19,401 spaces for Regional Force Battalion/Special Tactical Command Post (STCP) upgrade program and 16,905 spaces to reduce to 1.1 million ceiling.

Source: MACDO

Figure: C-3

be prepared. To accomplish this planning, a tanking memorandum, CSAM 72-09, was prepared charging MACDO with coordinating the activities of a MACV planning group which would develop a long range force structure by 15 April 1972. The study group would develop the post-hostilities force requirement and incremental reductions in RVNAF to meet that force level.

(S) On 21 April 1972, COMUSMACV approved the Long Range RVNAF Force Structure Plan. This plan was a first effort to develop a viable, supportable force for defense of the Republic in the post-hostilities period. It was not meant to dictate the actual size or configuration of specific units that the United States would support. The Long Range RVNAF Force Structure Plan, forwarded to JGS on 30 April 1972, proposed a post-hostilities army structure composed of four infantry divisions and an airborne division.⁴⁴ MACV amended this proposed structure by suggesting retention of the Marine Division in lieu of an infantry division, in light of the Marine Division's demonstrated high degree of professional competence and reliability. Thus the RVNAF post-hostilities structure would contain three infantry divisions, an airborne division, and a marine division.⁴⁵ As of January 1973 the plan was still under study by JGS.

RVNAF MANPOWER PROCUREMENT

(C) At the beginning of 1972 the assigned RVNAF strength including ARVN, VNN, VNAF, VNMC, and Regional Force/Popular Force was 1,046,254, compared to the authorized RVNAF force ceiling of 1.1 million.⁴⁶

(C) At the time of the North Vietnamese invasion, force strengths had increased somewhat and as of 31 March the RVNAF had an assigned strength of 1,058,380.⁴⁷

(C) Despite heavy casualties resulting from the invasion and an increasing number of desertions, the RVNAF was able through various means to

maintain its overall strength throughout the year and in most months actually reflected increases.

(U) During April 1972 a series of measures was taken to provide manpower assets to RVNAF immediately.

—A Ministry of National Defense (MOND) Communique of 12 April, followed by JGS Postal Message 14734 dated 18 April and JGS Memo 1386 dated 26 April, provided for an amnesty period for draft dodgers and deserters. The amnesty period lasted from mid-April to the end of May.

—JGS Postal Message 14202 of 18 April reduced the training time for basic trainees from twelve to nine weeks.

—JGS Postal Message 15444 of 20 April provided for the conversion of Regional Force personnel to ARVN on an individual basis. A later Memo 2492, dated 8 June 1972, authorized the use of complete Regional Force and Popular Force combat units to replace combat units of infantry divisions which were no longer capable of performing combat operations due to losses. In the latter case, Regional Force and Popular Force personnel were not converted to ARVN.

—JGS Memo 1368 of 24 April provided for the restoration of military laborers. These personnel were to be released to their parent units for duty.

—Military personnel awaiting trial for minor offenses were released to their parent units by JGS Memo 1369 of 24 April.

—JGS Postal Messages 15439 and 16038, dated 20 and 25 April respectively, called for the immediate apprehension of all illegal PSDF members and their induction into ARVN.

Three additional measures were seriously considered but either not fully implemented or not implemented at all:

—The recall of the 38 to 43 age group. This was implemented initially but then cancelled because of the serious drain it would impose on the experienced labor force.

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New recruits receive equipment at the Nien Hoa Recruiting and Induction Center.

—The recall of personnel detached to government agencies except the national police. This was not implemented for the same reason as above.

—The induction of the 17 year old age group. This was not implemented at the time because of problems created by not having a sufficient inductee base for the following year in this age bracket.

(C) On 17 May 1972 GEN Cao Van Vien, Chief, JGS/RVNAF, signed and issued Memorandum 1716 which directed the formation of the JGS Manpower Resources Control and Support Committee. This organization was empowered with the authority and responsibility to assure RVNAF a timely and uninterrupted flow of manpower during the period of increased hostilities. Subordinate to this committee were committees established at province and sector level by direction of the Prime Minister on 4 May. The province and sector committees were to report to the JGS committee on a daily basis. Through the efforts of the committees and the normal recruiting procedures, approximately 150,000 new ac-

cessions were provided within four months. By 31 August the RVNAF assigned strength was 1,097,157.⁴⁸

(U) Although the JGS committee was disbanded in September, the lower level committees were retained. The chiefs of staff of the various sectors were the chairmen of their respective province committees. However, due to the fact that the chairmen were military and the problem of manpower were considered to be a civilian one, the Prime Minister directed that province chiefs would assume the chairmanship of their committees effective 1 January 1973. It was felt that this action would produce more effective conscription.

(C) As in 1971 the problem in manpower procurement was primarily in conscript accessions. The RVNAF normally met its total accession goals, but conscript fill for the ARVN infantry battalions posed a major obstacle because few volunteered for this duty. The VNN, VNAF, VNMC, Regional Force, and Popular Force were able to achieve most recruiting goals with little difficulty, although a

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critical shortage existed in the VNAF due to the level of schooling required and the limitation of the training base. As of 31 January 1973 the assigned strength of RVNAF was 1,085,703.⁴⁰

RVNAF Monthly Assigned Strengths

JAN 72	1,052,842
FEB 72	1,051,431
MAR 72	1,056,380
APR 72	1,061,378
MAY 72	1,070,042
JUN 72	1,097,218
JUL 72	1,099,299
AUG 72	1,097,122
SEP 72	1,097,157
OCT 72	1,098,735
NOV 72	1,091,855
DEC 72	1,089,002
JAN 73	1,085,703

Mobilization Efforts During 1972

(U) It was apparent early in 1972 that the existing mobilization laws did not contain the flexibility to produce the required resources when needed. On 8 July 1972 the 1968 General Mobilization Order was amended by Decree Law 2/72. The major aspects of Law 2/72:

—Eliminated the requirement to call 39 to 43 year olds before 17 year olds.

—Provided for release of RVNAF members when strength permitted.

—Eliminated the deferment system and established mobilization in place.

—Gave the government authority to activate personnel who were mobilized in place.

(U) It is significant to note that for the first time the law provided for discharge based on force strength. This new provision accomplished a foundation and legal basis for the expansion of discharge options. The mobilization in place concept was initiated as a method of insuring greater control and accountability of all personnel of military age who were not serving in the RVNAF for any of a number of legally recognized reasons. Personnel mobilized in place would continue in their civilian status and be paid by their present employer. They would not be entitled to military pay or allowances but would be subject to military control and discipline when failing to maintain the conditions of mobilization in place, and they could be activated when required. Since mobilization in place was a new concept, the deferment system was extended until new procedures for mobilization in place were developed. This occurred in December 1972 and was effective during the first quarter of 1973.⁴⁰

(C) On 14 August 1972 a joint MACV/MOND directive was published, establishing a combined

committee for the express purpose of developing and recommending a revised law that could be applied in both peace and war. The specific areas of study included:

—Policy and criteria for obligated national service for draft age males.

—Simplified deferment categories and tightened criteria.

—Mobilization in place policy and procedures.

—Demobilization.

—Term of service.

—Policy of draft exemptions.

(C) The combined committee finalized a proposed military service law for submission to the Ministry of National Defense on 19 October 1972. The proposed law was intended to summarize and clarify the series of past laws, decrees, and ordinances and contained the flexibility so sorely required in the past. Pertinent articles of the proposed law were:

—Three categories of mobilization: normal, partial, and general.

—Service (active or reserve) by all able-bodied males from age 16 to 50.

—Specific term of service under normal and partial mobilization; release of service member when strength permitted under general mobilization; maximum accessions to permit discharge of senior service members.

—Establishment of reserve force elements.

—Deferments on selective basis under normal and partial mobilization; mobilization in place under general mobilization conditions.

—Its application to reserve servicemen and to all servicemen when involuntary extensions were implemented under partial and general mobilization.

(C) The proposed law was signed by President Thieu on 21 December with only minor changes. After submission of the proposed law on 19 October 1972 the combined working committee continued to meet for the purpose of studying an efficient and responsive system that would provide for the release of servicemen with long years of service as the RVNAF force structure reached the assigned strength ceiling; additionally, the committee would study and make recommendations on the methods and problems of demobilization. This second task was to be a long term endeavor and had not been finalized as of January 1973.⁴¹

ARVN Strength and Force Structure

(C) On 1 January 1972 the ARVN force ceiling was 444,177 as opposed to an assigned strength of 407,963. Despite losses incurred as a result of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive, the ARVN assigned strength increased steadily through the year. In July 1972 a new ceiling of 448,953 was approved,

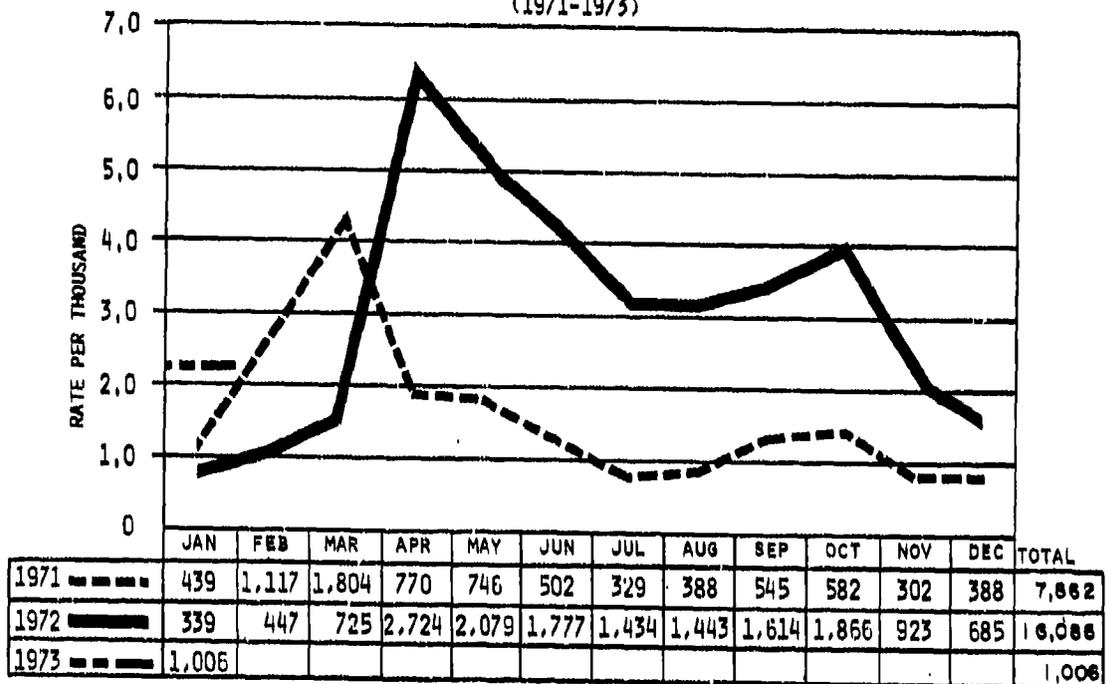
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MONTHLY ARVN CASUALTIES (KIA)
RATE PER 1,000 ASSIGNED
(1971-1973)



Source: MACDP

Figure: C-4

and by 31 July the assigned ARVN strength was 460,419 or approximately 103 percent of authorization. Throughout the remaining months of 1972 and early 1973 the assigned strength fluctuated due to casualties and desertions. Figure C-4 shows the ARVN casualties by month. Desertion rates are discussed in a later section. Monthly assigned strengths of ARVN since January 1972 are listed below:

JAN 72	416,586
FEB 72	417,373
MAR 72	421,263
APR 72	427,049
MAY 72	437,215
JUN 72	466,620
JUL 72	460,419
AUG 72	464,838
SEP 72	466,709
OCT 72	467,362
NOV 72	461,045
DEC 72	458,473
JAN 73	452,430

(S) ARVN force structure changes that took place in 1972 included the reorganization and activation

of several units under Project ENHANCE. Major items of equipment were further provided under Project ENHANCE PLUS, but as late as January 1973 JGS indicated that it intended to use this equipment for training and float with no units to be created. A possible exception which was still pending in January 1973 was an activation of artillery units to compensate for the withdrawal of ROKFV artillery.⁸² The major additional units added to the force structure were as follows:⁸³

--Antitank capabilities were significantly increased by the addition of tube launched, optically tracked wireguided (TOW) missile sections to 20 of the infantry regiments, three airborne brigades, and seven ranger groups, as well as to I, II, and III Corps headquarters. Additionally, 106mm and 90mm recoilless rifles were distributed to selected maneuver units that faced the greatest enemy tank threat.

--Two additional M-48 tank battalions were added to the II and III Corps reserve.

--An air defense capability was enhanced by providing two additional ADA battalions, each comprised of two M-55 batteries (24 weapons each) and one M-42 battery (24 weapons each).

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—Three 175mm artillery battalions were added to provide additional long range artillery and counter-battery capabilities.

—Army Strategic Technical Departments (ASTD) were added to the Airborne Division, the ranger groups, and the 44th Special Tactical Zone to provide a tactical signal intelligence (SIGINT) capability and to offset the continued drawdown of US forces.

(S) Major items of equipment provided under ENHANCE PLUS were:

- 72—M-48 Tanks
- 30—M-41 Tanks
- 117—M-118 APCs
- 44—105mm Howitzers
- 12—155mm Howitzers
- 8—175mm Howitzers
- 8—M-708 Armored Cars

(S) The complete ARVN force structure in January 1973 was:

- 11 infantry divisions (35 regiments, 105 battalions)
- 1 airborne division (3 brigades, 9 battalions)
- 7 ranger groups (21 battalions)
- 7 armored cavalry squadrons (non-divisional)
- 3 M-48 tank squadrons (1 deployed, 2 in training)
- 33 border defense ranger battalions
- 5 175mm artillery battalions (2 deployed, 3 in training)
- 41 105mm artillery battalions (36 divisional, 5 non-divisional)
- 15 155mm artillery battalions (11 divisional, 4 non-divisional)
- 204 105mm artillery platoons (2 howitzers each)
- 4 air defense artillery (ADA) battalions (1 deployed, 1 in training, 2 to be activated).⁶⁴

VNN Strength and Force Structure

(C) On 1 January 1972 the VNN force ceiling was 40,681 as opposed to an assigned strength of 42,267. In July 1972 a new ceiling of 39,742 was approved, and as of 31 July the assigned VNN strength was 44,076 or approximately 111 percent of authorization. Throughout the remaining months of 1972 the assigned strength decreased approximately 2,000, and as of 31 January 1973 the assigned strength was 42,086.

VNN Monthly Assigned Strengths

JAN 72.....	43,122
FEB 72.....	43,144
MAR 72.....	42,915
APR 72.....	42,790

MAY 72.....	42,780
JUN 72.....	43,505
JUL 72.....	44,076
AUG 72.....	42,842
SEP 72.....	42,837
OCT 72.....	42,726
NOV 72.....	42,429
DEC 72.....	42,196
JAN 73.....	42,086

(S) The major VNN force structure changes for FY 73 decreased the authorized watercraft from 1,680 to 1,523, included the transfer of three high endurance cutters (WHEC) to VNN assets, which enhanced surface surveillance and coastal interdiction capabilities; caused a reorganization of the VNN Blue Water Headquarters; and included additional spaces for coastal radar sites. Project ENHANCE PLUS did not provide any additions or changes to the VNN force structure. As of January 1973 the VNN force structure consisted of:

743	riverine craft
110	harbor defense craft
259	logistic and support craft
411	coastal surveillance craft
<u>1,523</u>	craft total ⁶⁵

VNAF Strength and Force Structure

(C) On 1 January 1972 the VNAF force ceiling was 47,058 as opposed to an assigned strength of 49,475. In July 1972 a new ceiling of 64,507 was approved and as of 31 July the assigned VNAF strength was 48,817, or approximately 76 percent of authorization. Throughout the remaining months of 1972 and early 1973 the assigned strength increased only slightly and as of 31 January 1973 the assigned strength was 54,349.

VNAF Monthly Assigned Strengths

JAN 72.....	49,342
FEB 72.....	49,152
MAR 72.....	49,332
APR 72.....	50,379
MAY 72.....	50,326
JUN 72.....	50,160
JUL 72.....	48,817
AUG 72.....	49,454
SEP 72.....	50,539
OCT 72.....	51,629
NOV 72.....	50,858
DEC 72.....	51,629
JAN 73.....	54,349

(S) The major VNAF force structure changes during 1972 were the result of Projects ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS. While ENHANCE basically accelerated the delivery of already scheduled aircraft, ENHANCE PLUS resulted in the formation of

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additional squadrons. The following are the major changes that resulted:

—Two additional CH-47 squadrons were added to provide a medium helicopter lift squadron for each of the four military regions.

—Three additional A-37 squadrons were added to provide an improved close air support and interdiction capability in the near border areas.

—Two additional F-5A squadrons and the early activation of three F-5E squadrons with F-5A aircraft provided additional close air support and interdiction capability. Three of the six F-5A squadrons were to be employed for air defense.

—Additional UH-1 helicopters were provided for improved direct support of ground forces by increasing the unit equipment of existing squadrons and eventually adding three additional squadrons for a total of 19 UH-1 squadrons to support the four military regions. Additionally, one SAR/MEDEVAC squadron was located in Military Region 1 and eight SAR/MEDEVAC flights were distributed in the remaining military regions to provide emergency service to combat forces.

—Ten additional EC-47s were added to provide increased airborne radio direction finding (ARDF) capabilities as US forces were withdrawn.

—Thirty-five O-2 aircraft were added to replace a like number of O-1 aircraft, thereby providing superior performance capabilities in the mountainous regions of Military Regions 1 and 2.

—Two squadrons of C-130 aircraft were provided to increase VNAF air transport capability in terms of total aircraft capacity and outside loads. Additionally, the aircraft simplified the logistics system by eliminating the C-123s from the VNAF inventory.

—Consistent with the process of Vietnamization, undergraduate pilot training capabilities were improved to provide the basis for increased reliance on in-country training in T-37 and UH-1 aircraft.

—One AC-119K squadron was added that provided increased firepower and truck killing capability.⁸⁰

(TS) A detailed summary of the VNAF force structure as of January 1973 is shown in Figure C-5.

VNMC Strength and Force Structure

(C) On 1 January 1972 the VNMC force ceiling was 14,072 as opposed to an assigned strength of 14,312. In July a new ceiling of 14,402 was approved, and as of 31 July the assigned VNMC strength was 17,391 or approximately 121 percent of authorization. Throughout the remaining months of 1972 and early 1973 the assigned strength fluctuated only slightly until the last two months of this period. As of 31 January 1973 the assigned strength was 14,879.

VNMC Monthly Assigned Strengths

JAN 72.....	14,381
FEB 72.....	14,327
MAR 72.....	15,411
APR 72.....	15,277
MAY 72.....	15,775
JUN 72.....	17,081
JUL 72.....	17,391
AUG 72.....	16,886
SEP 72.....	16,674
OCT 72.....	17,179
NOV 72.....	17,100
DEC 72.....	16,128
JAN 73.....	14,879

(TS) In June 1972 JGS responded favorably to a MACV proposal that a one battalion amphibious raid capability be developed within the VNMC. In August MACV requested 30 LVTP-5s as an addition to Project ENHANCE.⁸¹

(S) Following a series of exchanges concerning the advantage of the LVTP-7 versus the LVTP-5, in November JGS approved the ENHANCE PLUS addition of 31 LVTP-5 amphibious vehicles as substitutes for the LVTP-7 until the latter became available in FY 74. The 137 spaces to be used for the amphibious company would be supported from within the VNMC force structure.⁸² Additionally, a TOW antitank company was provided to give the VNMC an improved antitank capability. A Strategic Technical Detachment (STD) was also added to provide a tactical signal intelligence capability to offset the loss of support previously provided by US forces.⁸³ The basic force structure of the VNMC as of January 1973 consisted of one division of nine maneuver battalions and three 105mm artillery battalions.⁸⁴

Territorial Forces Strength and Force Structure

(C) Significant CY 72 ceilings and assigned strengths are shown in Figure C-6.⁸⁵

(TS) In May 1972 a joint JGS/MACV committee proposed a force structure change for Territorial Forces which would convert 307 Regional Force group headquarters to Regional Force battalion headquarters and would activate 45 sector tactical command posts (STCP) to provide command and control of the Regional Force battalions.⁸⁶ On 31 May JGS approved the plan, and a phased implementation began which was essentially completed by the end of 1972.⁸⁷

(S) As space requirements involving ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS materiel developed, JGS habitually identified Territorial Force spaces for trade-off. In August the 8/72 Committee was formed to identify trade-off spaces from within the entire RVNAF. By January 1973 the committee identified

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VNAF FORCE STRUCTURE

UNITS	AUTHORIZATION AS OF JAN 73	ACTIVE/OPNL AS OF JAN 73	FUTURE FORCE STRUCTURE
Fighter Squadrons.....	3--A-1 7--A-37 1--F5A	3/3 A-1 7/5 A-37 2/0-F5A**	3--A-1 10--A-37 6--F-5A — 19
Air Defense Squadrons.....	3--F-5E	0/0 F-5E	0
Gunship Squadrons.....	1--AC-47 1--AC-119G	1/1 AC-47 1/1 AC-119G	1--AC-47 1--AC-119G 1--AC-119K — 3
Helicopter Squadrons.....	16--UH-1 2--CH-47	16/16 UH-1*** 2/1 CH-47	21--UH-1 4--CH-47 — 25
Recon Squadrons.....	1--EC/RC-47 1--EC-47	1/1 EC/RC-47 1/0 EC-47	1--EC/RC-47 1--EC-47 1--RC-119G — 3
Transport Squadrons.....	1--C-119 1--C-47 3--C-123 3--C-7	0/0 C-119* 0/0 C-47* 1/1 C-123* 3/1 C-7 2/0 C-130**	3--C-7 2--C-130 — 5
Training Squadrons.....	1--T-41/ T-37/ UH-1	1/1 T-41/ T-37/ UH-1	2--T-41/ T-37/ UH-1
Liaison.....	8--O-1/U-17	8/7 O-1/U-17	8--O-2/U-17/ O-1
Special Air Mission Squadron.....	1--VC-47/ UH-1/ U-17	1/1 VC-47/ UH-1	1--VC-47/ UH-1/ U-17
TOTAL.....	54 Squadrons	51/39 Squadrons	66 Squadrons

*Units being inactivated to support ENHANCE PLUS. All would be inactivated by the end of January 1973.

**ENHANCE PLUS activations.

***Represents an increase of 3 squadrons at 35 UE each, increase of the UE of 16 existing squadrons from 33 to 35 aircraft, and formation of 2 SAR/MIDEVAC dedicated squadrons (one with 24 UE and one with 34 UE).

Source: MACDO

Figure: C-5

RF/PF STRENGTH CEILINGS

	1 JAN 72	1 JUL 72	1 JAN 73
Regional Force Ceiling.....	296,985	324,561	324,561
Assigned.....	283,947	300,646	300,865*
Popular Force Ceiling.....	258,027	206,028	206,028
Assigned.....	246,314	227,950	218,908**

*Does not include those personnel transferred from Popular Forces.

**Does not include 1,743 personnel transferred to ARVN and Regional Forces.

Source: MACDP

Figure: C-6

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16,905 Popular Force and 1,737 Regional Force trade-off spaces for the 1.1 million ceiling requirement.⁶⁴

**Regional Force Structure
(As of Jan 73)**

TYPE UNITS	AUTHORIZED STRENGTHS
Combat	261,576
Combat Support	8,878
Combat Service Support	22,602
Training Base	3,350
Hq Units	14,019
Pipeline	18,860
Awaiting Distribution	776
TOTAL	324,561

**Popular Force Structure
(As of Jan 73)**

TYPE UNITS	AUTHORIZED STRENGTHS
PF Platoons	194,271
Pipeline	11,757
TOTAL	206,028

Women's Armed Forces Corps

(U) The Women's Armed Forces Corps, (WAFC) had an authorized strength of 1 percent of the ARVN total strength, but was only a part of the contribution of women to the country's defense. As of December 1972 there were 4,334 WAFC, 3,105 National Policewomen, 465 female Revolutionary Development workers, and more than a million volunteer women in the People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF). Including the PSDF, 20 percent of Vietnam's population was involved in defense in one way or another; of this number at least 30 percent were women.

(U) The WAFC were assigned to different units often close to their homes after graduation and advanced training. Of the 4,334 WAFC, 133 were attached to the Air Force, 88 to the Navy and four to the Marines. The others were divided among regular ARVN units and militia units of the Regional Forces. In September of 1972, 2,038 WAFCs were based in the Saigon area, 808 in Military Region 1, 175 in Military Region 2, 381 in Military Region 3, and 526 in Military Region 4.⁶⁵

(U) WAFC end of year strengths were as follows:⁶⁶

1965—1,436	1969—3,892
1966—2,203	1970—4,139
1967—2,701	1971—3,892
1968—3,918	1972—4,334

REVIEW OF FY 74 FORCE STRUCTURE

(TS) The combined JGS/MACV FY 74 RVNAF Force Structure Review, which commenced on 29 November 1972 and culminated in the JGS final proposal on 12 January 1973, was submitted to

CINCPAC for approval on 27 January 1973. CINCPAC approved the review and forwarded it to JCS on 6 February. The review, conducted under direction of the JGS kept the force structure within the authorized RVNAF resources. Participating RVNAF agencies and commands were told by the JGS cochairman that the US would not support any further increases in equipment above programmed levels and that proposals for new unit activations must have corresponding equipment trade-offs as well as manpower space trade-offs. Accordingly, no cost data were provided for FY 73 or 74 force structure changes since these changes would be accomplished from within currently available or programmed equipment. However, VNN had two long lead time requirements that were already approved by CINCPACFLT and included in the FY 74 MASF program: PF-107 Patrol Frigates to replace the aging Patrol Craft Escorts (PCEs); and ferrocement Coastal Raiders to replace the Yabuta, Kien Giang, and Command Junks. CINCPACFLT later revised requirements to replace the aging PCEs by indicating that the employment of PF-107s as attrition craft should receive continuing study in service channels.⁶⁷

(U) Many of the significant RVNAF force structure changes that had occurred during FY 73 were described. Additionally, there were several FY 74 force structure proposals, comments on JCS special items of interest, ongoing studies, and unresolved issues that could later impact on future RVNAF combat capabilities and resource management.

FY 74 Force Structure Proposals

(S) Although overshadowed by significant increases in combat capabilities brought about by Projects ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS during FY 73, FY 74 force structure provided increased capability, especially in the support areas, to replace withdrawing US forces.

—ARVN Proposals:

(1) The Long Binh Depot, activated by JGS in FY 73 because of massive logistical problems, was proposed for authorization in FY 74.

(2) Artillery survey platoons were proposed to provide an electronic survey capability at each corps to increase accuracy and responsiveness of RVNAF artillery assets.

(3) Single Integrated Military System (SIMS) teams would be established for inspection and evaluation of newly acquired SIMS sites as well as maintenance of ICS circuits throughout Vietnam.

(4) Mobilization offices would be established at the sector level under the Director of Mobilization to provide definitive lines of authority and responsibility in the conscription of manpower for the RV-

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NAF and to provide a more precise method of conscription through by-name drafts.

—VNAF Proposal: VNAF was to become self-sufficient in various support areas such as liquid oxygen production and electric power production.

—VNN Proposal: VNN would improve logistics management through proposed additions of storekeepers and revised logistics management activities at various levels of the VNN.

—VNMC Proposal: An amphibious tractor company was proposed as the organizational element to employ the LVTP-5s provided under Project ENHANCE PLUS. Trade-off spaces were provided from within VNMC resources. This proposal was later designated by CINCPAC as an approved FY 73 force structure change, vice FY 74.⁰⁵

—Regional Force Proposal: Internal realignments were proposed for two additional subsectors formed in response to a Department of Interior decree.

—Multiservice Proposal: An increased emphasis on upgrading inspection capabilities was evidenced by additions and realignments of spaces for increasing IG activities throughout the RVNAF.

Comments on JCS Special Items of Interest

(TS) JCS requested that seven items be considered during the Force Structure Review and that comments be included in the report. The items of interest were:

Manpower and structural questions associated with improving the reserve deployment capability of ARVN divisions.

(TS) It was concluded that:

—The general reserve units of RVNAF (Airborne and Marine Divisions and designated ranger groups) had continually demonstrated a country-wide deployment capability.

—Manpower structural and personnel considerations were not deemed significant constraints to improved mobility and reserve deployment capability of ARVN infantry divisions.

Effects, if any, of discontent at the village level caused by upgrading Regional Forces and Popular Forces.

(TS) It was concluded that there was no specifically identified and statistically supportable evidence of discontent at the village level as a direct result of the Regional Force upgrade program. However, there were several aspects of the program that could, in time, prove fertile areas for village level discontent.

Economic and political effects of the current Vietnamese manpower policies.

(TS) It was recommended that:

—A policy reinstating a regular flow of servicemen through the military must be supported by a

continuing effort to increase accessions beyond losses due to combat and desertions. Such an effort must include maintaining a tight control on draft deferments, losses due to combat and desertions, effective methods of identifying draft evaders, and continued efforts at recruitment and reduction in deserters.

—Plans to develop a reserve force should consider the economic effects of the flow of personnel through the active duty and reserve systems. Moreover, study should be undertaken to determine the feasibility of using the military as a means to develop civilian skills determined necessary by the National Manpower Committee and the Ministry of National Planning and Development.

—Force levels must be compatible with existing national plans for economic stability and growth. The economic effects of a continued diversion of a large proportion of the labor force away from nonmilitary economic activities must be weighed carefully against the military need for personnel.

—Force structure planning that included reduction in force must be closely coordinated with government economic planning to insure optimal utilization of the released personnel. Demobilization would result in a major redistribution of labor between the military and civilian sectors of the economy. Unless offsetting programs were developed and undertaken, unemployment with attendant political instability could result.

Possibility of releasing some veteran RVNAF soldiers in view of the contributions experienced men could make to the economy and the leadership and military skills they could offer to PSDF units and village governments.

(TS) It was recommended that continued emphasis and US assistance be directed toward continuing and finalizing efforts currently underway in planning for release from active duty and demobilization of selected servicemen and establishment of a reserve force.

The impact of RVNAF force structure on ROKFV redeployment.

(TS) It was concluded that:

—Replacement of ROKFV forces had been studied by MACV/JGS on a recurring basis since March 1972. JGS accelerated unilateral planning for this contingency in late October 1972 on the basis of an imminent cease-fire.

—JGS plans included replacing the ROKFV with inter- and intra-military region redeployment of existing maneuver forces: two ranger groups in Military Region 3 and/or Military Region 4 and the 21st (M-48) Tank Squadron (ENHANCE equipment).

—JGS proposed activation of 12 artillery sections (2 tubes each) for deployment in Military Region

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2, the caliber of sections (105mm or 155mm) contingent on availability of weapons.

The impact of other current studies of specific elements of the RVNAF Force Structure.

—(TS) *ARVN Ranger Reorganization:* Throughout CY 72 there were various proposals for realigning the ARVN ranger organization including the formation of a ranger division employing the Ranger Command Headquarters and three of the seven ranger groups. The organization would have required extensive activation of combat support and combat service support units as well as US support of a significant equipment shortfall. While augmentations to the combat power of existing structures might profitably be considered, the MACV position was that additional structures such as the division proposal could not logically be supported. JGS later revised the proposal to the formation of three mobile ranger groups into brigades employing 741 additional manpower spaces and significant items of signal/transportation equipment. After COMUSMACV approval in concept in August 1972, the Chief, JGS postponed the reorganization because of the high level of organizational turbulence. JGS was continuing to study ranger reorganization and its relationships to Vietnamese ground border security.

—(TS) *Determination of a national defense planning system and a four year defense plan:* On 9 September 1972 the Prime Minister requested MACV assistance in (1) assessing and improving RVNAF planning capabilities, (2) integrating Ministry of National Defense (MOND) planning and that of other governmental ministries and agencies, and (3) achieving better allocation and utilization of resources. The end result of the committee was a system for orchestrating proposed PPBS efforts of the MOND, JGS, and subordinate agencies. Fully implemented, the system would achieve: the capability to project strategic options, military requirements, and costs well into the future; the capability to integrate military planning with that of other ministries to an extent not previously recognized; and a disciplined system that would force military planners to understand and accept resource management to ensure that budget expenditures achieved national defense programmed objectives. The committee proposal was approved by COMUSMACV and forwarded to Chief, JGS RVNAF and the Ministry of National Defense for their consideration.

—(TS) *Combined Arms Units:* The RVNAF utilization of tank and armored personnel carrier assets was the subject of numerous discussions with the JGS. They were encouraged to integrate mechanized infantry and tanks into combined arms elements by developing new units within existing equipment assets. Several proposals were developed and considered by a combined JGS/MACV committee recommending a brigade sized unit in each military region. Because the recommendation was indefinitely postponed, it was not known whether combined arms units would be formed.

—(TS) *Regional Force battalion and sector tactical command post program:* The program to strengthen command and control structures of Regional Force units by upgrading Regional Force company group headquarters to battalion headquarters and by creating sector tactical command posts (STCPs) for control of a given number of upgraded battalions encountered some difficulties. Combined JGS/MACV inspection teams determined at several points in the progression throughout the various phases that significant problem areas such as equipment shortages, severely strained leadership pools, and a lag in operational deployment of the STCPs was hampering the progress of the entire program. JGS was cautioned that it might be prudent to delay previously projected dates for completion of each phase; however, COMUSMACV continued to pledge full support of the program.

—(TS) *VNAF Maritime Air Patrol Squadron:* The need for the Maritime Air Patrol Squadron employing RC-119G aircraft was being reevaluated because of costs and difficulties related to installation of the APS-122 radar on the aircraft. Results of this reevaluation could require revisions to the FY 73-74 RVNAF force structure at some future date.

An analysis of the current status of Territorial Forces in Vietnam.

(TS) It was concluded that in 1972 Regional Forces were significantly strengthened at some expense to Popular Forces strength. As a result of JGS decision planning, additional Popular Forces strength reductions were used to fund regular forces increases including those made in direct response to Projects ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS. Planning for future roles and strengths of Territorial Forces was being undertaken in both a unilateral JGS and combined JGS/MACV manner.⁴⁰

RVNAF LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP EVALUATION AND STRUCTURE

(C) A method for the evaluation of an individual's overall effectiveness existed in the official and

formal efficiency rating system within the RVNAF. Efficiency reports were rendered annually for officers and semiannually for enlisted men. Individuals

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in leadership positions who received an overall unsatisfactory report were considered inept leaders and dismissed from their duties through administrative process. In practice subordinate commanders through whom reports were routed normally took action to relieve such individuals prior to formal relief action by the JGS. However, there are no statistics available to substantiate this.

(C) A problem in the RVNAF leadership effectiveness in 1972 was the shortage of officers in the appropriate rank assigned to command positions. In June 1972 there were 104 ARVN maneuver battalions, of which only four were commanded by lieutenant colonels. Forty were commanded by majors, 38 by captains, and two by lieutenants. By the end of October 1972 only one of 106 ARVN maneuver battalions was commanded by a lieutenant colonel. Seventy were commanded by majors, 35 by captains. Throughout the year, JGS recognized the problems of having maneuver battalions commanded by company grade as well as lower field grade

officers and attempted to correct the situation. However, the problem was compounded by the fact that the requirement for effective leadership in the sectors and subsectors kept a considerable number of senior field grade officers from serving in tactical units. As part of a long range plan for improving RVNAF leadership the JGS began work on an officer career management program. This program envisioned a basic career development plan that included all services and provided career guidance for schooling, training, and assignment of all officers and NCOs. As of 31 December 1972 the program was in the final stages of development.

(C) RVNAF leadership and motivation training received considerable emphasis during 1972 at the various training centers and service schools. Although there was some indication that small unit leadership improved, it was virtually impossible to determine how much of the improvement was due to the increased training.

(C) The North Vietnamese invasion of March 1972

KEY POSITION CHANGES (1972)

PREVIOUS INCUMBENT	ASN	REPLACEMENT	EFT DATE
LTG NGUYEN VAN VY.....	MOND.....	TRAN THIEN KIEM.....	2 APR 72
COL NGUYEN QUOC TUAN.....	J1/JGS.....	COL LAI DUC CHUAN.....	1 JUL 72
COL TRAN NGOC THONG.....	AG/JGS.....	COL TRAN VAN THAN.....	2 AUG 72
COL PHAM VAN TIEN.....	CHIEF, J6.....	COL CAO MANH THANG.....	16 AUG 72
BG PHAN DINH SOAN.....	CDR, ARTY CMD.....	LTG NGUYEN XUAN THINH.....	25 JAN 72
COL PHAN HOA HIEP.....	CDR, ARMOR OMD.....	BG LY TONG BA.....	10 OCT 72
COL NGUYEN NGOC THIET.....	CDR, MP CMD.....	COL NGUYEN HUU PHUOC.....	26 JUN 72
COL TRAN CONG LIEU.....	CDR, RGR CMD.....	BG DO KE GIAI.....	10 AUG 72
LTG DU QUOC DONG.....	CDR, ABN CMD.....	BG LE QUONG LUONG.....	11 NOV 72
LTG HOANG XUAN LAM.....	CDR, I CORPS/MR I.....	LTG NGO QUANG TRUONG.....	2 MAY 72
MG NGUYEN VAN HIEU.....	DCDR, I CORPS/MR 1.....	LTG LAM QUANG THI.....	10 MAR 72
MG PHAM VAN PHU.....	CDR, 1ST INF DIV.....	BG LE VAN THAN.....	11 NOV 72
MG NGUYEN VAN TOAN.....	CDR, 2D INF DIV.....	BG TRAN VAN NHUT.....	25 AUG 72
BG VU VAN GIAI.....	CDR, 3D INF DIV.....	BG NGUYEN DUY HINH.....	9 JUN 72
LTG NGO DZU.....	CDR, II CORPS/MR II.....	MG NGUYEN VAN TOAN.....	10 MAY 72
MG LE NGOC TRIEN.....	CDR, 22D INF DIV.....	BG PHAN DINH NIEM.....	25 APR 72
BG VO VANH CANH.....	CDR, 23D INF DIV.....	BG TRAN VAN CAM.....	19 OCT 72
COL LE VAN HUNG.....	CDR, 3TH INF DIV.....	BG TRAN QUOC LICH.....	4 SEP 72
MG LAM QUANG THO.....	CDR, 18TH INF DIV.....	BG LE MINH DAO.....	4 APR 72
LTG NGUYEN XUAN THINH.....	CDR, 26TH INF DIV.....	BG LE VAN TU.....	25 JAN 72
LTG NGO QUANG TRUONG.....	CDR, IV CORPS/MR IV.....	MG NGUYEN VINH NGHI.....	3 MAY 72
MG NGUYEN VINH NGHI.....	CDR, 21ST INF DIV.....	BG CHUONG DZENH QUAY.....	28 AUG 72
BG TRAN VAN HAI.....	CDR, 44TH SP TAC Z.....	COL HOANG DUC NINH.....	12 MAY 72
LTG LE NGUYEN KHANG.....	CDR, MAR DIV.....	BG BUI THE LAN.....	5 AUG 72

VNAF..... No significant changes. However, additional assignments were made due to force structure increases.

VNN..... No significant changes. However, more positions were established due to increased numbers of missions as a result of the US withdrawal.

Source: MACDP

Figure: C-7

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showed that the RVNAF was less hesitant to relieve ineffective commanders than had been the case in prior years. In May 1972 the commanders of I and II Corps were replaced. During the period April through October 1972, seven of 11 infantry division commanders were replaced. Some of these actions were as a direct result of their performance during the invasion. In other instances the action was taken in an effort to place strong leaders in command positions. The turbulence caused by these command position changes was further complicated by the

resulting changes in key positions throughout the corps and division staffs. Figure C-7 shows a listing of significant key position changes that occurred during 1972. In addition to those indicated in Figure C-7, 20 province chiefs and three training center commanders were replaced or received new assignments during the year.

(U) It is necessary to remember that the Vietnamese and US concepts of leadership were not the same and were influenced by different constraints.



LTC Ngo Quang Truong (left) Commander, I Corps/Military Region 1, and GEN Cao Van Vien accompany President Thieu of Quang Tri.

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While there was general agreement on the basic principles, there was considerable difference in the methods of applying those principles, as well as the values and attitudes by which leadership effectiveness is measured. Such things as the importance of political influence or the kin relationship could not be properly evaluated by utilizing an American approach to leadership. The problem of effective evaluation was further compounded by the tendency to judge the quality of the RVNAF leadership without giving sufficient consideration to such mitigating factors as the dilution of capable leaders in the increased force structure; combat casualties of the more aggressive leaders; the cultural, political, and ethnic influences; and most importantly, the quality and motivation of the soldiers being led.

(U) RVNAF assessment of the leadership problem was essentially one of recognizing that overall leadership among NCOs and officers had improved but that further improvement in 1973 was both necessary and desired.⁷⁰

OFFICER AND NCO PROMOTIONS

(C) Officer promotions during 1972 were considerably lower than the quota or goals projected at the beginning of this period. Although the North Vietnamese invasion of March 1972 resulted in numerous recommendations for battlefield promotions, many officers could not be promoted because they did not meet the exacting criteria. The AG/JGS, insofar as was possible, gave the officers non-battlefield functional promotions in lieu of permanent promotions. Although non-commissioned officer and enlisted promotions also fell short of the annual goals, the larger percentage of promotions within the non-commissioned officer and enlisted grades occurred as a direct result of the North Vietnamese invasion when President Thieu authorized liberal promotions of personnel who were serving in units which had performed exceptionally well in combat. Figure C-8 reflects the promotion results for the year 1972. In September 1972 MOND convened a special committee to review RVNAF promotion policies. In late October MOND received the committee recommendations which were then forwarded to President Thieu for approval. The most significant revisions approved by MOND were the institution of an "up or out" promotion system and a change in the time in grade requirements for certain officer promotions. Officers in the grades of captain, major, or lieutenant colonel could be released from active duty if not promoted at the end of seven years in grade, while first lieutenants would be released after five years in grade. Additionally, officers would have to be in grade for a period of three years before becoming eligible for a permanent promotion. This generally increased

time in grade for promotion for most grades. Most RVNAF officers appeared to be enthusiastic about the changes and felt that they would have a significant impact on the promotion system.⁷¹

RVNAF DESERTIONS

(C) Desertions in recent years had been the greatest single source of RVNAF manpower losses and served one of the biggest continuing problems confronting the RVNAF leadership. In 1972, a period that included the NGUYEN HUE Offensive and some of the heaviest casualties of the war, 70 percent of all manpower losses were desertions. Total gross and net desertions are shown in Figure C-8.

(C) Specific causes of desertions were numerous, with the most frequent relating to the close family kinship ties existing within the Vietnamese culture. Other factors such as the intensity of combat operations, poor living conditions, long family separations, low apprehension risk, limited punishment, and the impact of ineffective leadership in combat were all factors that had been identified in the past and still existed as factors contributing to the high number of desertions. The Vietnamese recognized desertions as a major problem and instituted a number of measures to reduce them. A desertion control committee at JGS level and others at subordinate levels down through regiment and sector were formed to analyze desertion statistics and causes and recommend control programs, with concurrent emphasis by senior Vietnamese officers on command and leadership aspects. This was accomplished by frequent directives to commanders and by staff visits. In addition, nationwide roundup operations were conducted by military units and the National Police to apprehend deserters hiding out in the cities and villages. A national identification system which required turn-in of civilian identity cards by soldiers made it more difficult for the deserter to escape detection. Further, punishment for deserters was increased. In the field POLWAR indoctrination of soldiers and local government officials became more frequent. Attempting to get at the roots of the problem, RVNAF made efforts to improve the morale of frontline units by improved pay and living conditions, standdown time, reinstatement of ordinary leave suspended after March 1972, and better care of dependents. MACV studies indicated that there were no easy or short term solutions to the RVNAF desertion problem. Rather, desertions would be reduced as multiple actions were taken on a broad front and as leadership and national allegiance improved.⁷²

(C) In early February 1973, subsequent to the cease-fire, a survey was made to determine if an upsurge of desertions occurred at the time of the cease-fire. There had been some increase in the

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1972 PROMOTIONS

GRADE	RVNAF STRENGTHS		NON-BATTLEFIELD PROMOTIONS				BATTLEFIELD PROMOTIONS		TOTAL PROMOTIONS	
	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASSG</u>	<u>ANNUAL QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>FUNCTIONAL QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>
GEN (5 STARS)	1	0								
GEN (4 STARS)	10	1								
LTC	14	10				2		1		3
MG	76	16						2		2
BG	163	43				22		7		29
TOTAL GEN	264	70				24		10		34
COL	901	513	45	30	44	31	32	20	121	81
LTC	3,581	2,074	338	250	216	75	110	49	664	374
MAJ	9,225	5,141	704	488	396	255	172	146	1,272	889
CPT	23,348	12,609	1,939	1,581	2,305	444	971	166	5,215	2,191
1LT							595	218	595	218
2LT	46,419	51,810					595	126	595	126
ASP			511	412			280	27	791	439
TOTAL OFF	83,730	72,277	3,537	2,761	2,961	829	2,755	762	9,253	4,352

GRADE	RVNAF STRENGTHS		NON-BATTLEFIELD PROMOTIONS				BATTLEFIELD PROMOTIONS		TOTAL PROMOTIONS	
	<u>AUTH</u>	<u>ASSG</u>	<u>ANNUAL QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>FUNCTIONAL QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>	<u>QUOTA</u>	<u>USED</u>
MSG 1CL	8,769	6,892	928	763			535	373	1,463	1,136
MSG	29,949	18,125	3,761	2,068			2,207	1,461	5,968	3,524
SFC	66,314	66,496	3,706	2,095			4,026	2,994	7,732	5,899
SSG	118,410	97,151	12,137	11,215			5,893	4,113	17,830	15,328
TOTAL NCO	223,442	188,664	20,532	16,141			12,461	8,941	32,993	25,892
CFC	145,137	89,333	18,450	12,347			16,726	10,934	35,186	23,281
CPL	143,300	109,429	31,661	28,191			27,105	17,977	27,105	46,168
PFC	149,596	157,194					48,391	30,155	48,391	30,155
PVT	148,291	251,078								
TOTAL EM	586,324	607,034	50,111	40,538			92,232	59,066	110,682	99,604
PF PLAT CDR	7,047	7,280								
PF MEMBERS	189,449	211,605								
GRAND TOTAL	1,100,000	1,086,860								

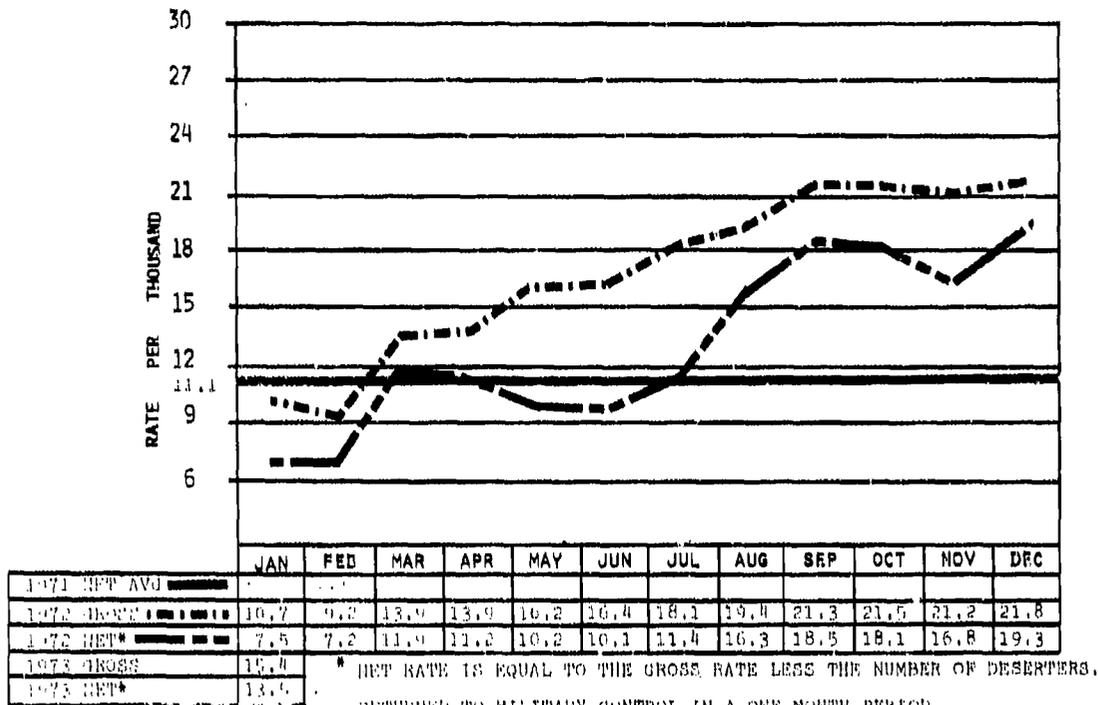
*Due to incomplete QD22 reports a total of 2,022 personnel are unaccounted for when the total assigned as indicated is compared with actual assigned strength as of 31 Dec 72 (1,089,882). A by rank and force distribution of 12,022 could not be obtained.

Source: AG/JGS

Figure: C-8

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TOTAL RVNAF DESERTION RATES



Source: MACDP

Figure: C.9

number of desertions due to JGS Postal Message 03088/TTM of 24 January 1973 which reduced the time from 14 days to 48 hours for establishing an individual as a deserter. It was generally concluded, however, that despite fears to the contrary

desertion was not a major problem confronting the RVNAF during this critical period, and there was no significant increase in desertions after the cease-fire. This was largely attributed to increased command emphasis down to the small unit level.

ARMY ADVISORY GROUP

**MACV TRAINING DIRECTORATE:
PREDECESSOR OF THE ARMY
ADVISORY GROUP**

(C) The Training Directorate, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, was formed in July 1971. MACV General Order 2088 redesignated the former Schools and Training Advisory Detachment as a new staff agency of MACV Headquarters. The new organization was given the mission to advise and assist the Central Training Command (CTC) of the Joint General Staff and its subordinate components in all facets of training. This

mission, with attendant responsibilities, continued into 1972.

(C) The Director of Training was the principal American advisor to the Central Training Command for training and related matters. He was also charged with primary staff responsibility for various specific tasks. He was required to provide advice and assistance to the Central Training Command to help in the development of an effective system of military training for the RVNAF. This system included preparation of doctrine and training literature, annual training ammunition require-

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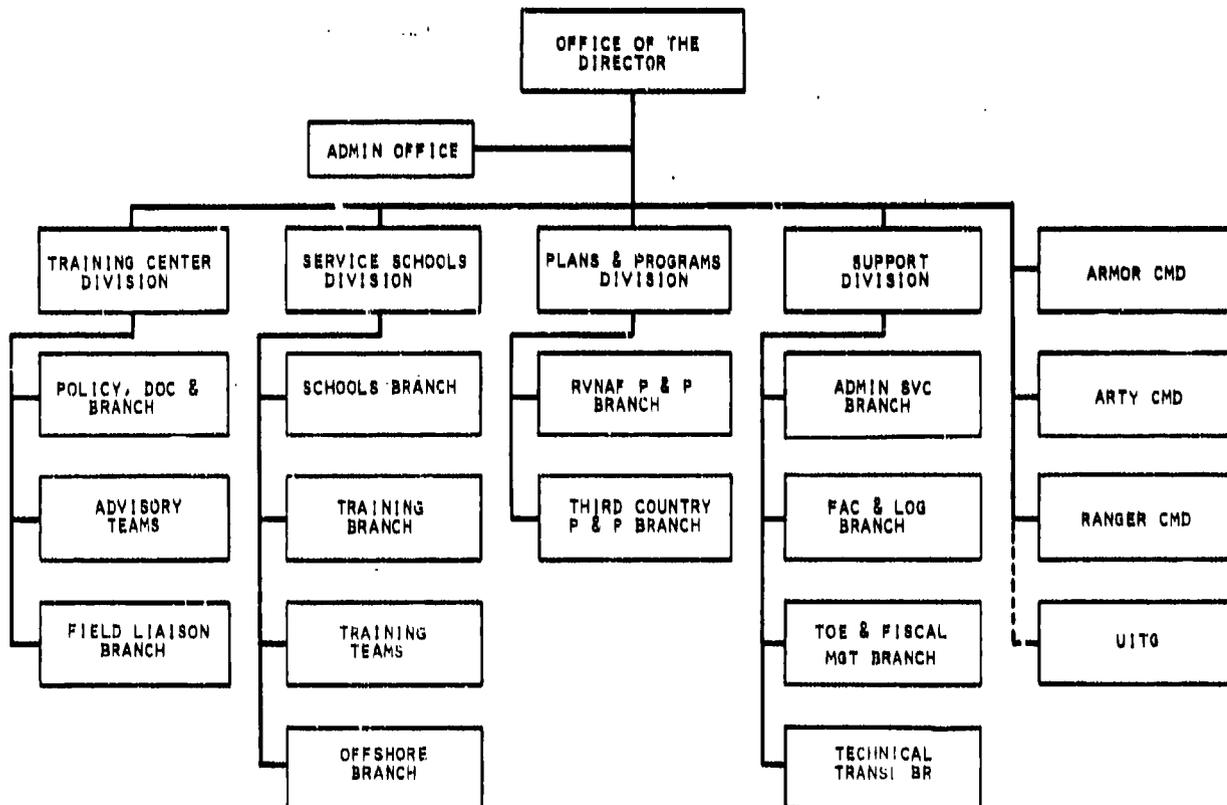
ments, the training budget, and programs for development of facilities. Other duties of the Training Directorate involved planning, preparing, and executing the Army portion of the Military Security Assistance Training Program. The organization was also charged with the coordination of training matters that involved American, Free World, and South Vietnamese armed forces participation. The director was given coordinating authority over the MACV advisory effort in RVNAF training matters. Finally, he was given the responsibility to command and support the Training Directorate and its assigned field advisory elements.

(C) To support the performance of these duties, the Training Directorate was organized into four functional staff divisions and three advisory detachments. These latter were charged with advising and assisting the Armor, Artillery, and Ranger Commands of the ARVN. In addition, the Director

of Training was given operational control of the USARV Individual Training Group. The organizational chart for the Training Directorate is shown in Figure C-10.

(C) The Plans, Programs, and Analysis Division provided advice and assistance to the Vietnamese Central Training Command on the development and preparation of the RVNAF Training Development Plan. The division also supported the command in monitoring the execution of this plan. Another function was to prepare evaluations and summaries of statistical data pertinent to the Training Directorate areas of interest. One task was the development of long range plans for the improvement of the training base. This staff element was also responsible for the preparation of material submitted by the Training Directorate in recurring reports to MACV.

TRAINING DIRECTORATE (MACT)



Source: MACT

Figure: C-10

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(C) The Training Centers Division provided advice and assistance to the Central Training Command on military training and related matters for ARVN and Regional and Popular Forces excluding schools, intelligence, airborne, and special forces. Command and control of the field advisory elements was a function of this division, as was the responsibility for the direction of the advisory effort at ten national training centers. These training centers were Lam Son, Duc My, Chi Lang, Dong Da, Van Kiep, Quang Trung, Pleiku, Phu Cat, Cao Lanh, and Hoa Cam. They also monitored training at the training centers of the 1st, 2d, 5th, 7th, 9th, 18th, 21st, 22d, 23d, and 25th Divisions. The Training Centers Division was also charged with monitoring the advisory effort at the Vietnamese National Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. It advised and assisted the RVNAF on all matters pertaining to organization, training, testing of personnel, operations, and logistics. It also advised on curriculum planning and matters pertaining to doctrine and policy in addition to monitoring training center operations.

(C) The Service Schools Division provided advice and assistance to the Central Training Command on the operation of the RVNAF service school system. It was the action agency for the execution of the Army portion of the Military Security Assistance Training Program. This division served as the MACV proponent element for on the job training of RVNAF with American units. It commanded the field advisory elements and directed the advisory effort at fourteen Vietnamese service schools. These schools included the Command and General Staff College, the Vietnamese National Military Academy, the Artillery School, the Armor School, the Infantry School, the Armed Force Language School, the Junior Military Schools at Vung Tau and at Pleiku, the National Defense College, the Signal School, the Ordnance School, the Engineer School, the Political Warfare College, and the Transportation School. The Service Schools Division also monitored the training at fourteen other service schools, ranging from the Logistics Management School to the Military Dog Training Center.

(C) The Support Division provided advice and assistance to all elements of the Central Training Command and the Training Directorate on facilities, budgets, logistics, and tables of organization and equipment.

(C) The Armor Command Advisory Detachment advised and assisted the Commander, Armor Command, on all matters pertaining to personnel, training, organization, intelligence, psychological warfare, and logistics. The detachment advised the command on armor doctrine and policy. It monitored Vietnamese armor units by personal contacts with the

units and their American advisors. The detachment gave advice on force structure and operational employment to the Armor Command and its subordinate elements.

(C) The Artillery and Ranger Command Advisory Detachments similarly advised and assisted their Vietnamese counterpart commands.

FORMATION OF THE ARMY ADVISORY GROUP

(C) As the withdrawal of American forces continued during 1972, consolidation of MACV staff elements and organizations became necessary. The Training Directorate was one of the major components affected. It became the nucleus around which the Army Advisory Group (AAG) was organized.

(C) There were several reasons for the establishment of the AAG. It was, in the first place, an attempt to consolidate the Army advisory effort within South Vietnam. Such an organization provided a single point of contact for handling the efforts of the advisors. Consolidation also precluded duplication of effort and allowed space reductions. As the American participation in the ground war continued to decline, the new AAG assumed the ground combat advisory role hitherto exerted by MACV. Finally, the organization was to parallel the advisory elements already established by the Navy and Air Force.⁷⁸

(C) The AAG was established as a result of an action memorandum published by the MACV Chief of Staff on 8 May 1972. This memorandum provided that the new advisory group would be organized through the consolidation of existing Army-related advisory activities. Province and district advisory teams were not included in the reorganization. Only those advisory elements charged with the mission of providing advice and assistance to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam were brought together under the new advisory headquarters. The memorandum stated that "The MACV Training Directorate (MACT) provides the nucleus of the AAG into which are transferred the Airborne Division Assistance Team, Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team (STDAT), the USARV Individual Training Group, and the ACofS, J4, ARVN logistic advisors." The headquarters element for the Army Advisory Group was to be created out of existing Training Directorate resources, which were augmented as necessary to provide command and control for the newly expanded missions and functions of the ARVN advisory headquarters. The reorganization was not to affect duty stations for advisory teams and detachments. The Army Advisory Group, less the logistics advisors, was directed to be established on 15 May 1972.⁷⁹

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(C) The logistics advisors were originally scheduled to be transferred to the Army Advisory Group on 1 July 1972, but the military situation created by the Communist offensive caused a postponement. Both the Chief, Army Advisory Group, and the MACV Director of Logistics were concerned that a transfer of personnel at that time might have caused a disruption in the logistics effort needed to sustain the RVNAF in their campaign to counter the enemy offensive. They also feared that a reorganization would hinder the successful completion of Project ENHANCE. Accordingly, the Chief, AAG, initiated action to defer this shift in logisticians, which had been approved by the MACV Chief of Staff in June; however, the transfer was never accomplished, and the advisors remained under the control of the MACV Director of Logistics.⁷⁰ AAG was organized as a major subordinate command on a par with the Regional Assistance Commands within MACV. With this change came a different focus in mission. The Chief, AAG, was charged with the overall mission to advise and assist the Army of Vietnam to achieve a high state of combat readiness and to improve the conduct of combat operations through the application of proper techniques, procedures, and training.

(C) The new organization was given the responsibility to provide the operational, organizational, and training advice for the four ARVN commands: armor, artillery, ranger, and airborne. Included within its purview was the management of the American staff and field advisory programs. The advisory group was assigned the tasks of planning, programming, budgeting, and managing the Military Assistance Program (MAP) funded Vietnamese Army offshore training program. AAG was also given the duty of coordinating the MACV advisory effort which involved joint service training matters, to include programming, monitoring, and reporting. A corollary of this was the assigned mission of coordinating joint US, FWMAF, and ARVN training matters. Other responsibilities included the command and conduct of training in South Vietnam of Khmer combat battalions and selected specialists, and the coordinating, monitoring, and supervising the execution of the efforts of the US Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia (MEDTC), insofar as these activities had an impact upon Khmer combat training programs. The Chief, AAG, was empowered to coordinate other third country training as directed by COMUSMACV.

(C) AAG was tasked to give assistance to the Vietnamese Joint General Staff in the form of recommended changes to ARVN personnel, materiel, and organizational structure. In the area of tactics, the new advisory element was directed to provide assistance to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces

in the development and publication of training literature and in ARVN combat and logistical doctrine. Development and management of the US funded portion of the ARVN facilities improvement program was an additional assignment. AAG was also charged with reporting to COMUSMACV on RVNAF utilization of material furnished by the United States and on the use of personnel trained under American auspices. A final mission, but never put into practice because of the delay in assigning the logistics advisors, was to provide advice and assistance to the Central Logistics Command to include management of the American staff and field advisory programs.

(C) In order to accomplish the expanded mission and increased responsibilities, AAG was established with an authorized strength of 8,300 personnel. The organization provided for nine directorate staff elements and a comptroller who was special assistant to the AAG Chief of Staff (Figure C-11).

(C) The AAG advised and assisted the Joint General Staff on budgetary matters within the AAG area of concern, to include analysis of applicable portions of the Government of Vietnam Defense Budget. AAG also recommended, justified, programmed, and monitored the use of joint support funds in advancing Vietnamese armed forces programs. The comptroller submitted and executed applicable Military Assistance Service Funding (MASF) and prescribed procedures for use and internal control of all American appropriated funds. He recommended financial management policies and served as the financial advisor to the Chief, AAG.

(C) The Office of Administration and Management provided administrative and personnel support to all staff and advisory elements of AAG. This function included the requisitioning and assignment of personnel and development of personnel policies, plans, and estimates. This staff element also maintained data on manpower requirements and strengths. In addition, it was assigned responsibility for recommending, processing, and monitoring AAG personnel policies.

(C) The Plans, Programs, and Special Actions Directorate was designed to assist and advise the ARVN in the attainment of a high degree of combat readiness. This agency was also charged with advising and assisting the Joint General Staff in developing effective plans for the Vietnamese Army. It was tasked to provide advice and assistance to the ARVN in the development of combat self-sufficiency through close support of the Vietnamese Central Training and Logistical Commands. It was also the staff agency specifically tasked to execute the Army portion of the Military Security Assistance Training Program, a carry-over from the Directorate of Training. The directorate developed

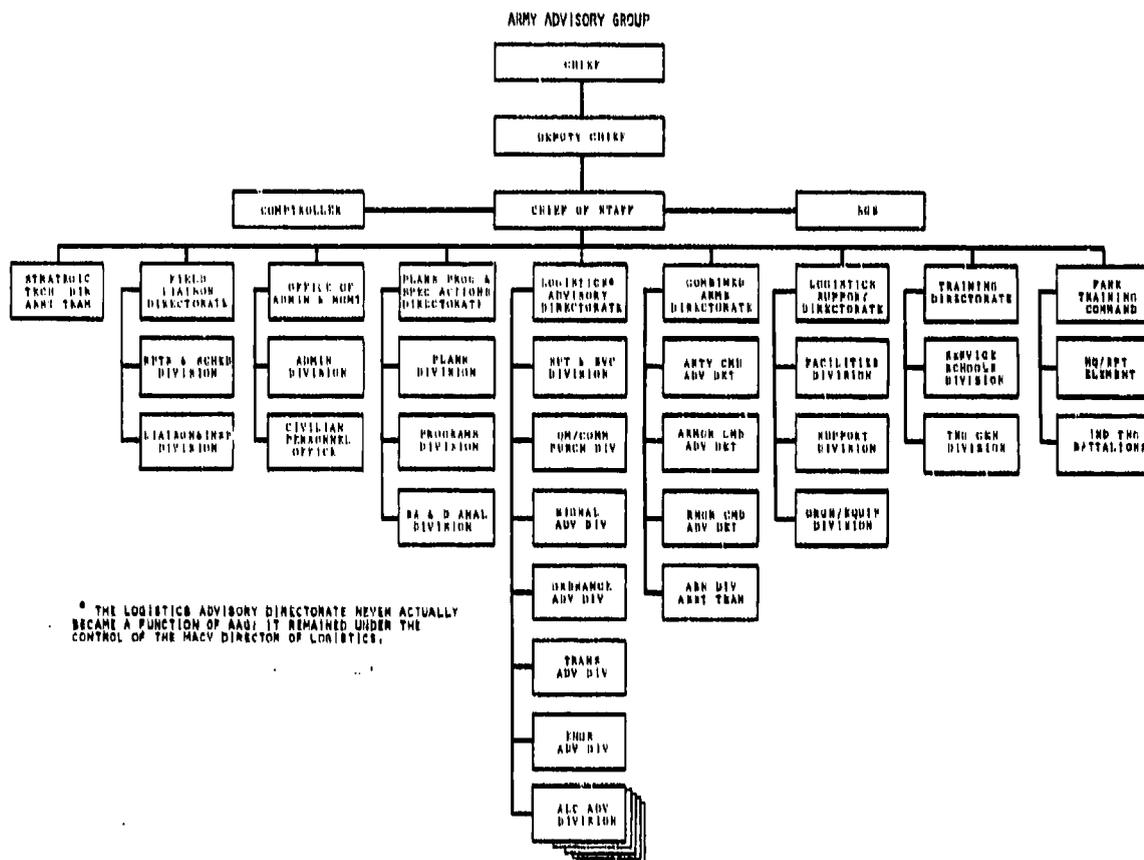
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Source: AAG

Figure: C-11

long range plans and monitored the execution of the FANK training program. Similarly, the directorate planned, prepared, and monitored special programs involving third countries, allied forces, and American joint military forces. It acted as the principal point of contact with the Military Equipment Delivery Team, Cambodia, and functioned as the office of primary responsibility for preparing the reports required of AAG.

(C) The Field Liaison Directorate was established to coordinate with the appropriate elements of the Joint General Staff and to schedule and conduct inspection and liaison visits to the field advisory elements of the AAG in order to monitor support of the field elements and to determine their degree of compliance with official directives and policies. It provided liaison to the subordinate organizations and interface with the Regional Assistance Commands and the Joint General Staff.

(C) The Logistics Support Directorate (not to be confused with the canceled Logistics Advisory

Directorate) was designed to provide advice and assistance to ARVN, RVNAF, and AAG elements and organizations on matters concerning logistics, facilities, training aids, training films, and audio-visual equipment. Some of its more important functions were to:

—Provide translation services for technical manuals, field manuals, and doctrinal publications as needed by the RVNAF Publications Review Board, and assist the Joint General Staff in the publication of documents within the purview of AAG.

—Act as the installation coordinator for all American activities on the Joint General Staff compound.

—Coordinate logistical support for all AAG elements and develop, in coordination with the Joint General Staff, the recommendations for materiel and training ammunition requirements.

—Act as the proponent agency for United States funded construction and rehabilitation programs for the Vietnamese armed forces and assist the Joint

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General Staff and AAG field advisory elements in base development planning, new construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance programming.

(C) The Training Directorate provided advice and assistance to the Army of South Vietnam with the purpose of helping them to achieve a high state of combat readiness through the application of the proper techniques and procedures of military training and education. It was charged with advising and assisting the Vietnamese Training Command in the training of RVNAF personnel. The directorate was the principal point of contact for information relating to activities at Vietnamese service schools and training centers. The remainder of the assigned duties of this new staff element were those for which the earlier MACV Training Directorate had been responsible. These included command and control of the American field advisory elements at the service schools and training centers and the monitoring of the training conducted there.

(C) The Combined Arms Directorate was responsible for advising and assisting the ARVN Armor, Artillery, and Ranger Commands and the Airborne Division to achieve a high state of combat readiness through the application of proper techniques, procedures, and training. This staff element was further charged to advise and assist the Vietnamese Army in the conduct of combat operations through the use of its assigned field advisory elements. The directorate was specifically tasked to provide advice and assistance to the commanders of the Armor, Artillery, and Ranger Commands and the Airborne Division on all matters pertaining to personnel, organization, force structure, training programs and scheduling, logistics, operations, intelligence, doctrine, and policy. It coordinated and directed United States air assets for the Airborne Division. The directorate also observed and reported on the quality of ARVN training and utilization of the material furnished by the United States.

(C) The FANK Training Command was assigned the mission of advising and assisting the Khmer military units undergoing training in South Vietnam to achieve a high state of combat readiness by means of the application of proper techniques, procedures, and training. It was responsible for conducting basic and advanced combat training and small unit leadership training for Khmer personnel and units and providing specialist training as required. In addition, it established and supervised the maintenance programs within FANK units undergoing training.

(C) The Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team was assigned to the Army Advisory Group and conducted special training for selected personnel and units.⁷⁰ Its activities are reported separately in Annex I.

RVNAF TRAINING, IMPROVEMENT, AND MODERNIZATION

(U) In the first months of 1972, RVNAF training continued to develop along the lines established in the preceding year. Because of the overall reduction in American forces in Vietnam, the MACV Training Directorate was assigned a manning level of 356 US military spaces to be met by 1 May 1972. To attain this goal and accomplish the advisory mission, increased emphasis on RVNAF motivation and self-sufficiency was necessary.⁷¹

Motivational Training

(C) Motivational training received priority attention from the beginning of 1972. The American advisory effort and the work of the Vietnamese JGS Central Training Command were closely coordinated with the JGS General Political Warfare Directorate to insure an integrated effort and to prevent duplication. The organization through which this goal was to be attained was the Joint Morale and Motivation Board. Established in August 1971, this board had representation from MACV, the Central Training Command, and the General Political Warfare Directorate. Its purpose was to review and improve motivational training methods and design other training methods to improve the RVNAF soldiers' will to fight. The board met at regular intervals and developed specific tasks that were approved by the Chief, Central Training Command.

(U) A project first initiated in 1971 but continued into 1972 was the production of a MACV/RVNAF motivational film. After some initial difficulties, the film was completed during the third quarter of calendar year 1972. When the film, "Growing Under the Colors," was reviewed before final printing and distribution by the POLWAR Department and the Chief, Central Training Command, several changes were recommended. Because these changes required additional funding, distribution of the film was delayed for three months.⁷²

(U) In addition to film-making activities, the Central Training Command brought up to date their plans for improving the motivational training for RVNAF recruits and students. Students were to be made aware of the importance of the course that they were attending. Student commanders were given new responsibilities in assuring that political warfare training was accomplished. The Training Command also improved the capabilities of the instructors and cadre of the various schools by giving them additional specialized training.

(U) Concurrently, the Central Training Command sought to improve the command and leadership abilities of the RVNAF. They directed that command and leadership programs from platoon leader

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to Command and Staff College be improved. To that end the Training Command also considered the preparation of additional field manuals on command and leadership. Leaders at all levels were encouraged to study and use the five motivational training handbooks that had been distributed by the Political Indoctrination Department of the General Political Warfare Directorate.

(U) Stress was placed on the improvement of political activities at the various service schools and training centers. The Central Training Command had as one of their goals the assignment of political warfare cadre to each student unit so that motivational training could be accomplished during informal activities in addition to formally scheduled classes. A complementary effort was devoted to improving recreational facilities, sports programs, and entertainment for new recruits and students. Student commanders were given new responsibilities in assuring that political warfare training was accomplished.

(U) Plans were also made to improve the environment in which the new recruit or student found himself. The Training Command sought to improve mess facilities, reception areas, and living quarters, as well as providing free services such as haircuts, tailoring, and transportation. The command also wished to provide assistance to students who were faced with personal and family problems. Planning was inaugurated for arranging transportation and overnight facilities for families who wished to visit the new recruits and students.⁸⁰

(U) Another project concerning motivational training was initiated under MACV auspices in January 1972. A contract was granted by the Training Directorate for a detailed study of improved motivational training techniques, which included a review of those aspects of Communist motivational training programs that might have potential value to the RVNAF program. This contract was awarded to retired Australian Army Brigadier F. P. Serong in March.⁸⁰

(C) In July a three part report was completed by Brigadier Serong and transmitted to the Army Advisory Group. This report had three specific objectives:

—To examine the Communist technique of personnel motivation and to determine the weaknesses and strengths of that system.

—To similarly examine the nature of motivation within the RVNAF.

—To extract those elements of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong system that appeared to be suitable for adoption by the RVNAF.⁸¹

(C) The study prepared by Brigadier Serong was still under review by the Army Advisory Group as of January 1973.

(U) At the 15 August 1972 meeting of the Joint General Staff Central Training Command morale motivation meeting, the consensus of opinion was that the goals of the program for the last year had been attained. However, shortcomings were noted in the training of cadre in proper motivation procedures. The committee attributed this to the interruption caused by the NGUYEN HUE Offensive and felt that the problem would not be resolved completely until motivation offices were established and functioning at the training centers.

(U) To continue the progress made during 1972, the program for 1973 was discussed. This program had many objectives and met many of the recommendations that had been independently proposed by Brigadier Serong. One objective was to continue to improve POLWAR programs and to present them to a wider audience. The interest of the Joint General Staff in improving motivation by beginning at high levels was set forth in a directive to prepare and present a one-week program to the staffs of the Vietnamese corps to train them in motivation and its importance. Motivation offices were to be established at the training centers and cadres were to be trained in proper motivation techniques. In addition, emphasis was to be continued on the student ration supplement, with stress to be placed on both the quality and quantity of the food being served. The committee indicated that they might seek assistance from the Army Advisory Group in expanding the budget for this program. The committee also set as a goal the development of a program to provide command information, entertainment, and reading material for the trainees. Intermediate and advanced motivation programs and greater emphasis on political warfare courses at the service schools were also proposed for 1973. The development of a script for a training film on leadership was proposed, although no planning was done on the project. The committee stated that they were considering the MACV proposal to study Viet Cong motivation techniques for possible application within the Vietnamese armed forces; however, the American impression at the meeting was that this proposal was not well-received by the Vietnamese members of the committee.⁸²

(C) Progress in the area of motivation training for the Vietnamese armed forces proceeded smoothly though slowly through 1972. The preparation of the motivational film; training of the cadre as well as the students; greater concern about the problems that faced the individual soldier, particularly family matters, money, and food; and the realization that greater stress was needed on training in political warfare were but steps in the right direction. Improving the immediate environment of the servicemen through better living accommodations, enter-

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tainment, and most important, better leadership, were also steps in the right direction.

Training Centers

(U) A critical area of concern for both the MACV Directorate of Training and its successor command, the Army Advisory Group, was the operation of the Vietnamese armed forces training centers and the quality of the instruction and training conducted there. Joint efforts on the part of the American advisory elements and the Central Training Command of the Joint General Staff were involved.

(U) One of the major continuing joint projects was the development, review, and improvement of the army training programs used by the Vietnamese. Measures were periodically taken to improve all aspects of these training programs. Revisions of the following training programs were undertaken during 1972:

—The twelve week ARVN/Regional Force recruit training program.

—The infantry battalion refresher training program.

—The ARVN/Regional Force reconnaissance company unit training and refresher program.

—The six week ARVN/Regional Force leadership preparation training program.

—The 16 week Non-Commissioned Officer Academy infantry training program.⁸³

(U) Before other Army training programs came under review in calendar year 1972, the Central Training Command revised the standard method of proposing changes. This changed approach came about as a result of an Army Advisory Group proposal. On 28 July AAG presented an outline concept to COMUSMACV for improvement of ARVN effectiveness through the use of unit training. COMUSMACV and the Chief of the Joint General Staff agreed to the general scope of the revision and approved the project for further development. The new program called for units to conduct annual ARVN refresher training from individual through division level. This was a joint project of the Army Advisory Group and Central Training Command.

(U) There were several concepts incorporated in the new program. First, beginning in January 1973, ARVN refresher training for individuals through units of division size would become a stated matter of Joint General Staff policy and Central Training Command master training directive. Concurrently, recruit training would become a Central Training Command national training center responsibility, with a 200 recruit training capacity remaining at the division training centers. This action would make available additional space in the division training areas for unit use. Refresher

training would be conducted within the assigned division area of operations. Corps maneuver areas to be designated and facilities of the division training centers would be augmented by the national training centers as necessary. The master training program which would prescribe certain categories of required training would be published annually by the Central Training Command. All tactical divisional infantry units would be trained at all levels to include field training exercises and army training tests. Regiments and divisions would also undergo command post exercises. Division annual training programs would be submitted to the Central Training Command for approval before they were implemented.

(U) Initially, unit instructors were to be assisted by cadre from the division training centers until the training proficiency of the unit officers had been established. Where required, ARVN special mobile training teams would be utilized to supplement unit training within each corps area. Unit adherence to the annual refresher training programs would be verified by Central Training Command field inspection. In addition, quarterly reports of progress were to be submitted to the training command by the corps commanders. Implementation of this new program was designed to accelerate attainment of self-sufficiency by the ARVN in addition to strengthening the ARVN command structure and providing mandatory combined arms training at each echelon.

(U) As a result of joint staffing and review by the AAG and the Central Training Command the process for development of army training programs (ATPs) was streamlined and systematized. Proponent agencies were clearly specified and were better able to develop expertise in depth on the type of training required for a given program. Continuity in monitoring the status of individual ATPs was possible now more than ever before. These were welcome changes to the earlier, more haphazard method. The new approach bore fruit; before the end of 1972 development and review of all ATPs were for the most part completed.⁸⁴

Combined Arms Training

(U) Proper use of the combined arms available to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces was an area of concern to Vietnamese commanders and to their US advisors at all levels. The issue became increasingly critical as US forces continued their withdrawal in 1972. As a result of a program begun in 1971, the RVNAF Combined Arms Handbook was prepared for publication and dissemination to Vietnamese units in February 1972. This handbook was also sent to training centers and service schools. Combined arms training was underway at

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Increased emphasis on combined arms training allowed RVNAF to more fully use its resources.

the Pleiku National Training Center and at RVNAF service schools by the end of January 1972.

(U) Both the Joint General Staff and its US advisors were concerned that improvement in the integration and employment of combined arms continue. To accomplish this, an RVNAF committee under the chairmanship of the Infantry School Commandant was formed, which was charged with the responsibility to compile the lessons learned through battlefield application of combined arms doctrines. Ultimately, these findings were to be incorporated into a revised edition of the Combined Arms Handbook.

(U) In October 1972 and again in March and May 1972 GEN Abrams wrote to GEN Vien, the Chief of the RVNAF Joint General Staff, to stress the need for top level emphasis to accelerate the acceptance by RVNAF commanders of the doctrines, procedures, and training necessary to make effective use of combined arms. Weaknesses in this area were made evident during the NGUYEN HUE Offensive.

(U) The efforts of COMUSMACV and the work of the advisors who assisted the RVNAF Committee

of Combined Arms Operations were soon partially rewarded. The Chief, Central Training Command authorized the publication of a periodic combat information bulletin based on the report of the Combined Arms Committee. Distribution of this information reached company level in all ARVN units, Territorial Forces, service schools, and training centers.⁴⁵

Advanced Marksmanship Program

(U) American and Vietnamese interest in improving the quality of training and thereby enhancing the proficiency of the Vietnamese Armed Forces was not limited to the issues of unit training and ATPs. The Central Training Command and its US advisors were also concerned about the ability of the ARVN servicemen to fire their individual weapons effectively.

(U) During January 1972 the Central Training Command and the MACV Training Directorate completed the development of a 26-hour advanced marksmanship program. Designed to improve rifle firing skills learned during the 82 hours of basic

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marksmanship training, this program was proposed as a substitute for the 26-hour M-16 rifle refresher program. The Chief of the Central Training Command approved the new program and after a test evaluation period in February by AIT units, it was incorporated into the instruction at all training centers in May 1973.⁸⁶

Innovations in RVNAF Training

(C) In their efforts to introduce innovations into the training of the RVNAF and FANK, the MACV Training Directorate and its successor, the Army Advisory Group, took several steps. Among these were the upgrading of the command positions of the USARV Individual Training Group, the instigation of the Kit Carson Scout Program, the publication of a monthly newsletter, and the use of mobile training teams for Vietnamese retraining as well as FANK training (the employment of mobile training teams in these roles will be discussed later). These efforts were carried on throughout calendar year 1972 and into 1973.

(U) As a result of a MACV manpower survey and a visit by the USARV Inspector General to the USARV Individual Training Group sites, action was taken to change the grade structures of the training group. The recommendation was made that the grade authorized for the Commander, USARV Individual Training Group, be upgraded from lieutenant colonel to colonel. A parallel recommendation was made that the grade authorized for the commander of each of the training sites be raised from major to lieutenant colonel. This change was desirable because it would provide increased experience and supervisory control at each location. Moreover, the site commanders would then have rank equivalent to that of the commander of the FANK battalion undergoing training. These recommendations were ultimately approved and placed into effect by Headquarters MACV.⁸⁷

(C) In November 1971 a trial program using Kit Carson Scouts as assistant instructors in teaching Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army tactics to RVNAF recruits was initiated at the Hoa Cam Training Center. Two months of testing and evaluation revealed that these former enemy enlisted men were not sufficiently knowledgeable to increase the instructional capability of the training center. Based upon the recommendations of both the commander of the training center and of his senior American advisor, a new program that would use former Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army officers in the same capacity was proposed to the Vietnamese Central Training Command. After it was determined that no former enemy officers were available, the decision was then made to conduct another test using available former enlisted enemy who were know-

ledgeable of the tactics involved and who were interested in taking part in the program. This program was finally canceled in July 1972 when the test and evaluation revealed that even selected former enemy soldiers who were working with American units know no more about enemy tactics, mines, and booby traps than the raw recruits off the streets of Saigon.⁸⁸

(C) In order to assist the American advisory teams engaged in efforts to improve the quality of Vietnamese training, a monthly newsletter was published which was designed to disseminate information and convey comments and policy from the Training Directorate and later the Army Advisory Group headquarters to the senior American advisors assigned to the Vietnamese training centers. In addition, it included items of interest submitted by all branches of the command concerned with training of the Vietnamese, as well as pertinent information from other agencies. Few areas of training were left untouched by the publication, whose interests ranged from misfire procedures with the M-72 Light Antitank Weapon to combined arms training. Its publication continued through 1972 until the cease-fire early in 1973.⁸⁹

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An instructor at the New Zealand counterinsurgency school directs the preparation of a defensive position.

**Effects of the NGUYEN HUE
Offensive on RVNAF Training**

(C) When the NGUYEN HUE Offensive of 1972 began in late March and early April in Military Regions 1, 2, and 3, certain changes were forced by the exigencies of the tactical emergency. One major change involved shortening the training of new recruits from 12 to nine weeks. The danger of placing insufficiently trained soldiers into combat as a result of this change was alleviated somewhat by increasing the length of the training day. Another step was to eliminate parts of the instruction that were not essential, combat-related subjects. The

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effect of these steps was a significant increase in the number of recruits entering the replacement stream and ultimately joining combat units. The original plan had called for 186,180 recruits to complete training during calendar year 1972. The revisions enabled 359,970 new soldiers to enter the replacement system during the year.

(C) In related steps to obtain the maximum effort to strengthen existing Vietnamese army units, certain types of training were halted. All regular army and Regional Force refresher training ceased until further notice, along with refresher training for non-commissioned officers.⁹⁵

(C) As the enemy offensive continued, the Vietnamese Joint General Staff and its US advisors became concerned that certain ARVN units that had been heavily engaged during the first weeks of battle might need retraining. This was especially true of those units which had received large influxes of new replacements. The Vietnamese Army units in Military Region 1 were of particular concern.

(C) On 24 April 1972 the Director of the Training Centers Division of MACV Training Directorate visited the northern I Corps battle area and determined that the 3d ARVN Division needed retraining before it was committed again to heavy combat; however, the tactical emergency did not permit this. Later tactical developments on the Quang Tri front increased the urgency of this retraining mission. When the enemy took the city in the first week of May, the 3d ARVN Division was combat ineffective.

(C) A team of 32 US officers and non-commissioned officers was drawn from the FANK Training Command and dispatched to the Dong Da National Training Center to conduct a three week on-site retraining program, which began with one battalion of the 56th Infantry Regiment in May, and was to continue with the other combat units until the 3d ARVN Division was again combat effective.

(C) A retraining program was also initiated for the 20th Tank Regiment which had similarly been rendered combat ineffective as a result of its participation in the battles around Quang Tri. A team of Americans from the FANK Training Command, augmented by three instructors from the Vietnamese Armor School, established a program of retraining which continued until July.⁹⁶

(C) The mobile training team program for retraining of ARVN units involved in the NGUYEN HUE Offensive in Quang Tri Province proved so successful that it was expanded to include all ARVN infantry battalions, Ranger battalions and ranger border battalions, in addition to some Regional and Popular Force elements, were also added to the

program. By the end of the year training had been completed for 50 infantry battalions, six ranger battalions, and ten ranger border battalions, and training for other units was in progress. The training was conducted by joint US/ARVN mobile training teams under the control of the FANK Training Command (FTC). In addition to the FTC elements, other US personnel were furnished by training center field advisory elements, and 1st Special Forces Group, Airborne, Okinawa. As a result of in-country space reductions, all special forces personnel were withdrawn before 1 December. ARVN personnel included instructors furnished by Central Training Command and interpreters furnished by J1 of the Joint General Staff. This program continued into early 1973.⁹⁷

(C) Although the major retraining effort of the mobile training teams was with regular Vietnamese military formations, other teams were formed and deployed in response to specific enemy threats. The two most important were in reaction to the threat from enemy armor and the danger to the security of allied installations.

(C) During the period 24 June to 1 August 1972 a training team composed of two US officers and five Vietnamese instructors trained 80 Vietnamese officers and non-commissioned officers on the operation and employment of the TOW antitank missile at Dong Da Training Center. Another mobile training team composed of instructors from the United States Army Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, conducted instruction on the TOW for key Vietnamese Central Training Command personnel during the period 10 to 22 July.

(C) Successful enemy sapper attacks against petroleum and ammunition dumps throughout South Vietnam had caused serious logistical problems for the RVNAF. To counter these attacks, a special training team program was designed by the FANK Training Command to assist Regional and Popular Forces who guarded key logistical installations. Security training teams, consisting of six Americans and eight Vietnamese with interpreters, were assigned the training mission. Ultimately nine of these mobile training teams conducted the required training of the logistical base security forces. Training at all installations was completed in November.⁹⁸

(C) Although the enemy offensive had disrupted the routine of RVNAF training, the Vietnamese and their US advisors reacted swiftly. Flexibility in modification of training schedules to speed replacements to the fighting battalions was only the first step. As the offensive continued and other needs were identified, additional training was conducted. At the same time the requirements for effective future

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training were evaluated as revision of training programs continued.⁹⁹

VIETNAMESE SERVICE SCHOOLS

(U) The key of a professional armed force lies in a sound system of military education for officers and enlisted men alike. Within such a system a nation not only strengthens its present defense but also builds for the future. Realizing this, the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, with the assistance and advice of its US advisors, developed an extensive service school system. As Vietnamization became increasingly important, it was reflected with success in the service schools. This system of military education ranged from technical training offered by the Power Generator and Air Conditioner Maintenance School to the academic education of the National Defense College.

(U) The Vietnamese system of service schools was for the most part, however, concerned with the training of the future leaders and commanders of the Vietnamese Armed Forces. The young officer could receive his commission in several ways, but the preferred way was through the Vietnamese National Military Academy at Dalat. From there he could go to one of the schools offering instruction in his branch of service. Later in his career he might attend the Command and General Staff College and, finally, the National Defense College. All of the schools below the Command and General Staff College level offered instruction to non-commissioned officers and enlisted men simultaneously with the training given to the officers; some of them were devoted exclusively to the technical training of enlisted men.

Vietnamese National Military Academy

(U) The Vietnamese National Military Academy was founded at Hue in 1948 and moved to Dalat in 1950. The academic and military instruction originally followed a three-year curriculum, but its program was extended to four years in 1961. The combat situation by 1962 required more junior officers and the academy was placed on a wartime footing with a two-year program of instruction. The US advisory effort had been concerned with the academy since 1955. In the intervening years much was accomplished in converting the school into a true academy that produced officers with a limited but sound basic college education and a broad knowledge of military subjects.¹⁰⁰

(U) During 1972 the faculty of the academy with their US advisors continued efforts to improve the curriculum and the quality of the instruction. A committee of the faculty began studying the feasibility of developing a curriculum that would provide majors programs in electrical, mechanical,

and civil engineering. Preliminary findings from the study, however, were that additional instructors with graduate degrees in the majors fields would be required before a meaningful majors program could be implemented. Further, the need for concentrating on developing sound fundamental courses was of greater priority for the immediate future.

(U) US assistance was provided to improve and modernize the physical plant of the academy. Specifically, the MACV Training Directorate provided a US electronics technician in January 1972 to repair the audio equipment in the language laboratories, and contractor installation of engineering laboratory equipment was finished by civilian contractors in May.

(U) A continuing problem was the failure of the Vietnamese government to authorize the academy authority to award a Bachelor of Science degree. Although there had been considerable optimism that degree granting authority would be given prior to the graduation of Class 25 on 15 December 1972, this proved to be a false hope.

(U) Vietnamization of the major school education and training functions was completed by the end of 1972. There was still room for improvement in management, maintenance, and standardization of instruction, however, and the US field advisory element assistance concentrated in these areas until it was withdrawn.

(U) By the end of 1972 the Vietnamese National Military Academy was in a period of transition from one of dynamic, spectacular growth to one of consolidation and phased improvements based upon limitations of funding and qualified personnel. The four-year curriculum was functioning and improving. The graduates of the institution had demonstrated their military qualifications in the armed services. The quality of their education was evident by their successful pursuit of graduate degrees in the United States in many cases.¹⁰¹

Thu Duc

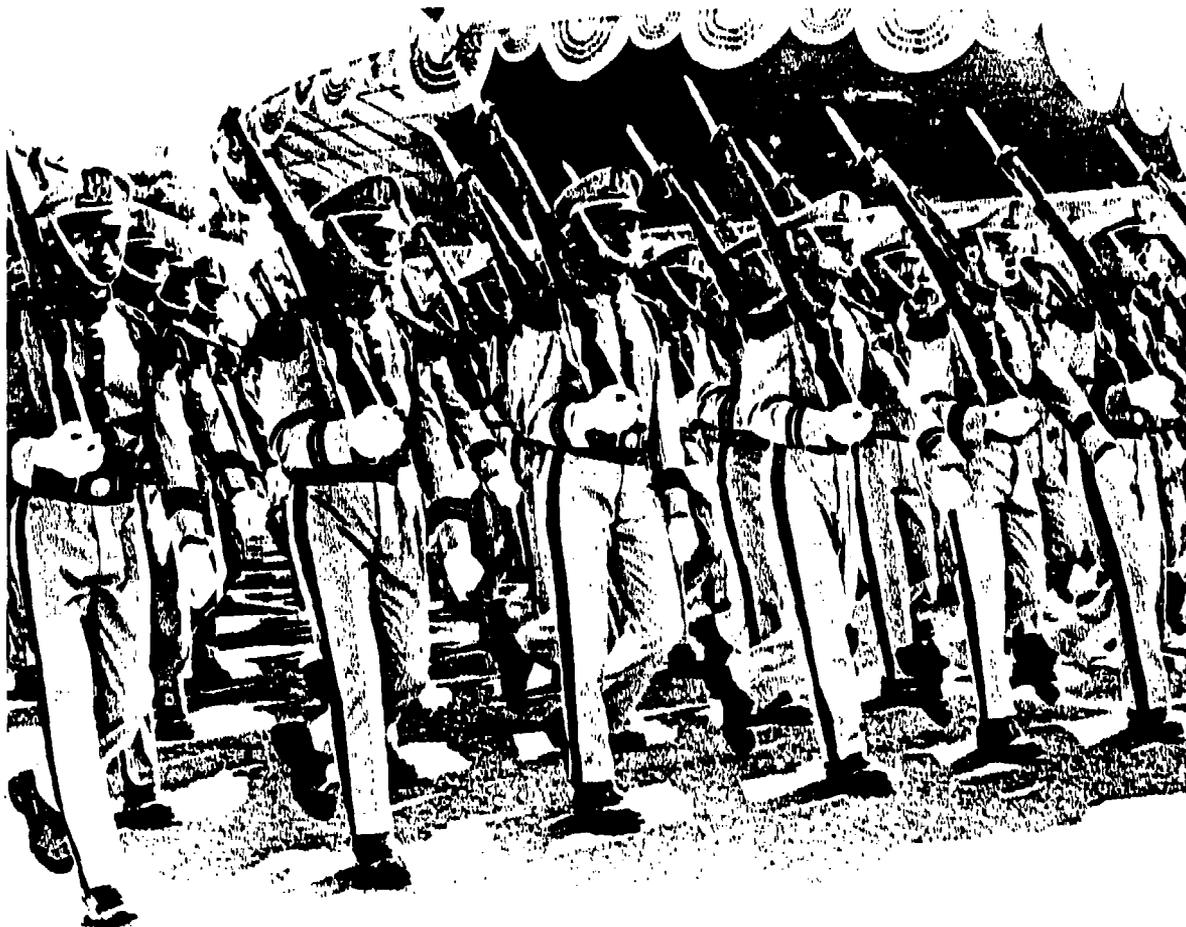
(U) One of the largest and most important military educational and training installations in the Republic of Vietnam was located at Thu Duc, Bien Hoa Province. In the mid-1960s an officer candidate school was established there to prepare students for reserve officer commissions. The installation was progressively expanded as the war continued. Special courses were added to the curriculum in artillery, engineering, ordnance, transportation, and signal communications through the years. By 1958 the school had graduated and commissioned almost 3,300 reserve officers. Branch schools then developed out of these special courses. By the 1960s the combined schools became known as the Thu Duc Mil-

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Cadets of the Vietnamese National Military Academy pass in review.

tary Schools Complex. Increased military needs caused further expansion and the development of additional facilities to accommodate more diversified training. The complex eventually became too large in size and the Artillery, Signal, Ordnance, Transportation, and Engineer Schools were transferred to other locations. The Infantry, Armor, Band, and Martial Art and Physical Training Schools remained at Thu Duc after the shift.¹⁰²

Infantry School

(U) The Infantry School at Thu Duc was the most important of the Vietnamese service schools with a combat arms orientation. As the war expanded in 1971 and 1972, the Infantry School also expanded. Consideration was given to moving the Armor and Infantry Schools to the old American base camp at Bearcat, but a serious delay was caused by a

dispute over the land rights to the area. This problem remained unsolved in the last quarter of calendar year 1972. Concurrent with the development of the proposed school site at Bearcat, the school began development of tank and artillery ranges near Long Thanh to the south of Bearcat. Completion and use of the range facility was held up, however, because artillery, tank, and mortar fire presented severe hazards to civilian and military aviation operating from airfields in the area.¹⁰⁸

(U) When the enemy offensive began in April 1972, the established routine of the Infantry School was broken. By the end of April the classes in attendance at the school were performing guard duty in Saigon. More important was the rapidly increasing requirement for junior officers within the South Vietnamese Army. To meet this need, officer candidate classes were rescheduled so that there

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would be five classes in session concurrently. Re-alignment of instructor and cadre personnel was necessary to handle this increase in workload. In addition, surveys were made to determine the feasibility of expanding the physical capacity of the school through the use of tents for billets, messing, and administrative areas. Additional personnel were scheduled to arrive at the school before the end of the year.

(C) The Infantry School reacted well to the crisis posed by the requirements to meet the enemy offensive. Training management on the part of the school was especially encouraging. Most of the problems caused by the expansion and subsequent rescheduling were anticipated and the appropriate support was requested promptly. Although the requests from the Infantry School could not be met in all cases, the commanders and staff maintained a positive, mission-oriented attitude. The Joint General Staff failed to assign the additional instructors and tactical officers as they had promised earlier; this had a serious impact on the quality of training and supervision provided to the officer candidates. However, the instructor workload was increased and unit commanders also served as platoon tactical officers in order to alleviate the overload requirements. This condition existed until the end of the crisis, at which time the requirement for junior officers decreased and the number of experienced officers and non-commissioned officers available for cadre duty correspondingly increased.¹⁰⁴

(U) Major problems which continued to merit the attention of the field advisory element were the need to place emphasis on quality graduates by improving standards, the assignment of quality officers as instructors and tactical officers, stabilization and improvement of various programs of instruction, and incorporation of concurrent and integrated training, particularly tactics classes.

Armor School

(U) The Armor School was first established by the French at the Vietnamese Military Academy in Dalat in 1950; in late 1952 the school was moved to its present location and became part of the Thu Duc Reserve Officers School. In February 1955 the armor portion of the officers school was established as a separate school with increased training facilities and was reorganized under the newly formed Thu Duc Military School Center. When the other schools of the training center were moved to new locations in October 1961, the Armor School became a separate entity under the Armor Command.

(U) The mission of the school was to train armored personnel in the use and tactics of all armored vehicles and related equipment found in

the RVNAF inventory. It also assisted the Chief of Armor Engineering by instructing basic and advanced unit training as required for newly activated ARVN armor units before their going into the field as operational forces, and it conducted troop refresher training for deployed armor units as required.¹⁰⁵

(U) In 1972 the Armor School shared with the Infantry School the problems associated with the delayed move to new facilities at Bearcat. However, they fared better in the use of a range because they were able to use with some limitations the new tank gunnery range at Long Thanh near Bear Cat. In 1972 unit training for twenty troops and seven Regional Force platoons was scheduled; however, this program was disrupted by the enemy offensive.

(U) Prior to the opening of the enemy offensive, the Armor School was able to conduct the first 90mm tank gunnery training with their new M-48A3 tanks at the Long Hai Range. This training was disrupted by the alert requirements imposed upon the Armor School by the Joint General Staff in the wake of the enemy NGUYEN HUE Offensive.

(U) Before the enemy offensive began, the school staff and faculty made continuous efforts to provide tank-infantry team combined arms training to local infantry units. By the end of March two airborne battalions, two marine battalions, and recruits at the Marine and Van Kiep Training Centers had received this training. It was a timely effort; this training was useful to these units when they were deployed to Military Region 1 to blunt the enemy offensive.

(U) In addition to having its course of instruction disrupted by the enemy offensive, the Armor School was heavily committed operationally during the period of greatest crisis during April and May and in subsequent months was involved in dispatching mobile training teams to conduct training for units in the field. In the third quarter of calendar year 1972 when the danger from the enemy offensive began to lessen significantly, the highest priority for the school became the training of two M-48A3 tank battalions. MACV's agreement to permit use of the Long Thanh range for 90mm gun-fire training in October facilitated the training of these two new battalions.¹⁰⁶

Artillery School

(U) The Artillery School was originally the French Army's Artillery Training Center of Indochina and was located in Phu Hoa in South Vietnam. In 1955, after the signing of the Geneva Accords, the Training Center was turned over to the RVNAF and was redesignated the RVNAF Artillery School. After several shifts the school moved in July 1961 to its present location in Due My where

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It was again reorganized as a separate administrative and logistic unit. It continued its mission of training artillery officers and non-commissioned officers in the operation and maintenance of all artillery equipment in the RVNAF inventory and also conducted basic and advanced unit training for the various ARVN artillery battalions that were being activated in the RVNAF.¹⁰⁷

(C) The Artillery School appeared relatively undisturbed by the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. As had the other combat arms service schools before the offensive began, it was conducting the routine training required to maintain a trained artillery force. When the offensive began, the commanding general of the Artillery Command immediately established a pool of recent graduates of the Artillery School to replace the personnel losses sustained during the fighting.

(U) For the most part, however, the school continued to complete projects as defined and scheduled in its 1972 training improvement plan. A training program improvement system was developed through the application of the Central Training Command Instructional System Development procedures. The largest problem for the school was in providing adequate instruction on new equipment that was issued to the troops in the field but not to the school. The school was particularly concerned that the only training which the Vietnamese Army received on these new weapons—the 175mm gun, the M-42 self-propelled 40mm Duster, the quad .50 caliber machine gun, the AN/MPQ4A countermortar radar, and the electronic ballistic meteorological set for the 175mm gun—was on-the-job training. A revised table of authorization and equipment for the school, which included the new items of equipment and support personnel, was submitted to the Central Training Command; approval was still pending in early 1973.¹⁰⁸

Engineer School

(U) The Engineer School had its earliest beginnings as a training center near Haiphong, North Vietnam, where until 1951 the French maintained an engineer center charged with the responsibility of instructing and training Vietnamese engineer soldiers. After successive moves to Thu Loc, Bien Hoa, and Yung Tau, the school was moved to its present location at Phu Cuong in Binh Duong Province in 1961. The school had since been conducting its mission of training officers, officer candidates, non-commissioned officers, and enlisted personnel of the RVNAF Corps of Engineers in the techniques, procedures, and methods of military engineering. The training mission was centered on the concept of training combat engineers through courses on engineer equipment operation, first and second echelon

maintenance, and other professional courses.¹⁰⁹

(U) The Engineer School in 1972 was relatively untouched by the war, although fierce small unit fighting raged in the vicinity at year end. The most important project at the Engineer School was its receipt of the responsibility for the cadre and facilities of the Yung Tau generator school, formerly under contract by Pacific Architects and Engineers.¹¹⁰

(U) The Engineer School had become a highly efficient and professionally administered operation by the end of 1972. It was able to absorb significant unprogrammed courses of instruction such as the training of fifteen FANK engineer companies during 1972. Even during periods when the school was in various degrees of alert status and significant portions of students and cadre were detailed to combat action nearby, the start and completion dates of courses needed only slight adjustment to accommodate needed instruction.¹¹¹

Command and Staff College

(U) Although the combat arms schools trained both officers and enlisted men, there were other schools which officers could attend. These were the service colleges. At the intermediate level, corresponding to its equivalent in the American armed forces, was the Command and Staff College in Dalat. The Command and Staff College had its beginning in Hanoi in 1952 when the French Expeditionary Corps established the Tactical Instruction Center with the mission of training the commanders of mobile groups, battalions, and companies. After the Geneva Accords of 1954 the college moved from Hanoi to Saigon, and in 1961 it was moved to Dalat, where by 1967 it had evolved and expanded into the present Command and Staff College.

(U) This institution was the senior tactical school in the Republic of Vietnam and was the only other institution besides the National Defense College that offered the education and prestige vital to the RVNAF. The Command and Staff College had a fivefold mission:

—To train selected ARVN field grade officers for duty as regimental commanders or province chiefs or higher, or as staff officers at division level or higher.

—To train selected ARVN majors and captains for duty as battalion commanders, district chiefs, or staff officers at battalion and regimental level.

—As a joint service institution, to provide a limited number of Vietnamese Air Force, Navy, and Marine officers with a sound knowledge of the operations of the armed forces in order to foster a high degree of cooperation and coordination between joint forces.

—To conduct an extension course for nonresident

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active duty officers in the grades of first lieutenant to major.

—To organize such special courses as the Joint General Staff might direct.¹¹²

(U) During the first quarter of 1972 the school continued to function routinely. As Vietnamization progressed, the position of the US academic advisor was deleted.

(U) Work toward improvement and modernization of the academic studies at the college proceeded also. A new program of instruction was published in 1972. The areas that were emphasized and strengthened were combined operations (in accordance with the attention given to this matter by GEN Abrams and GEN Vien), pacification and development, sector operations, and staff procedures; in addition, command and management practical exercises were increased and lectures decreased by 25 percent. Planning was begun to introduce an electives program into the curriculum. The commandant of the staff college approved this concept. A graduated approach was chosen to culminate in the formal introduction of the program in 1973.¹¹³

(U) Before the new program of instruction could be placed into effect, the enemy offensive struck. To provide more officers to the combat units who were trained by the staff college, the Joint General Staff directed a reduction in the length of the senior officer's course from 22 to 16 weeks. At the same time the Joint General Staff directed the staff college to develop and establish a group command and staff course for the Regional Forces. The college reacted well to all of these requirements, and the first class of Regional Force officers was graduated in June.

(U) As the crisis lessened, the school began to plan for the establishment of a Joint Command and General Staff Officers' Course lasting 36 to 40 weeks. In addition, plans were initiated to move the school from its inadequate facilities at Dalat. The Chief of the Army Advisory Group recommended to the head of the Central Training Command that the Command and Staff College move to the former American base at Long Binh in Bien Hoa Province, where the facilities were more adequate.¹¹⁴ In October 1972 the Chief of the Joint General Staff approved the move, which was scheduled to take place prior to 1 April 1973.¹¹⁵

National Defense College

(U) The National Defense College, located in Saigon, was the highest level military educational institution in the Republic of Vietnam. One of the newest Vietnamese armed forces schools, it was established by national decree in 1967, and the first class convened in May 1968 for the one year course of instruction. The position of the National Defense

College in the Vietnamese military establishment was equivalent to that of the American National War College or the other senior service war colleges in the United States.

(U) The Vietnamese National Defense College was given a two-fold mission:

—To educate outstanding high ranking military and career government civilians to become better qualified to perform important functions relevant to the national security.

—To study, plan, and develop national defense policy.

(U) The overall curriculum of the college consisted of an orientation, an individual research project, ten courses, and seven seminars. The courses and seminars fell within the three major categories of international affairs, national resources, and national defense strategy.¹¹⁶

(U) In 1972 the National Defense College continued its innovative and progressive educational program employing student trips, guest seminars, and case studies. During the third quarter of 1972 the faculty initiated studies with regard to introducing electives into the core curriculum. Preliminary discussions included the possibility of offering International Relations in the Twentieth Century, Internal Defense and Development, Economics of Underdeveloped Nations, and International Law.¹¹⁷

(U) A study concerning the utilization of graduates from the National Defense College was prepared by the advisory detachment. Significant conclusions were:

—That less than half of the students of the college were assigned at the time of graduation to positions of increased responsibility and trust commensurate with their potential in relation to their former assignment.

—That less than one third of the army students identified as being in the upper quartile of graduating students (in potential) were assigned to positions of increased responsibility and trust in relation to their former assignment.

—The better educated students (graduate and undergraduate level) received favorable assignments.

(U) There existed a discernible reluctance on the part of RVNAF general officers to accept invitations to lecture at the college, especially on military matters.¹¹⁸

Political Warfare College

(U) The Political Warfare College began as a psychological warfare training center that was established near Saigon in 1956. After several intermediate moves, and with the establishment of a General Political Warfare Directorate at the Joint General Staff level, the training center was redesignated the Political Warfare School and moved

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to its present location in Dalat. The institution was also upgraded to a service college and given the mission of providing a two year college level course to train professional political warfare officers.

(U) Other missions of the college included providing political warfare branch training for Vietnamese officers and organizing and directing political warfare specialist training as required. By the 1970s, as a result of the college and its training, the Vietnamese armed forces possessed political warfare officers in the field.¹¹⁹

(U) In 1972 the college continued to work on improvement and modernization, while accomplishing its mission of training students in cadet classes, officer classes, and allied personnel courses in an exceptionally fine manner. The planned move to the present Command and General Staff College area in 1973 would provide additional facilities to improve the overall effectiveness of training.

(U) During the fourth quarter of 1972 there were several proposals discussed regarding the future status of the POLWAR College as an independent institution. In a sense, the POLWAR College was in competition with the Vietnamese Military Academy, Thu Duc (Infantry School), and junior military academies to provide officers. Of the several proposals discussed, the idea of making the POLWAR College a graduate school for newly commissioned officers desiring to specialize in Political Warfare appeared to be potentially the best proposal.¹²⁰

(U) Supporting the efforts of the combat arms schools and the senior service schools was the group of schools for the technical services. They were in the Central Training Command and were also a part of the American advisory effort.

Signal School

(U) The Signal School was originally the Communications Training Center of the French Army in Indochina and was located in Gia Dinh. In 1954, it became the ARVN Signal Communications Training Center and consisted of two separate centers: The Signal School in Thu Duc, which had the primary mission of training signal officers for the ARVN and enlisted men of all services in signal equipment repair, and the Signal Training Center in Vung Tau which had the primary mission of training enlisted men of the RVNAF in techniques of operating all types of communications equipment.

(C) In October 1961 the Thu Duc portion of the school was transferred to and consolidated with the Vung Tau portion in their present location. The consolidated portion was designated the RVNAF Signal School and given the combined mission that both centers previously had.¹²¹

(U) By 1972 the withdrawal of American and Free World Military Assistance Forces had begun to affect the Signal School. The composition, mission, and future emphasis of the American signal advisory team was reviewed in January 1972. Because tactical communications branches within the school had reached a high level of competency, advisor strength was reduced. In the area of strategic communications the recommendation was to retain three advisors, because strategic communications would become an important part of the school when the 1st US Signal Brigade training facility was turned over to the Vietnamese. For the most part, these recommendations were approved and effected. The offensive necessitated the retention of an additional American as a staff advisor by August 1972. All Signal School advisors were withdrawn as part of Operation COUNTDOWN on 31 January 1973.¹²²

Ordnance School

(U) The Ordnance School was first established in 1952 as the Material Training Center at Thu Duc. In 1961 the school moved to its present location in Saigon, where it continued many and varied courses in its conduct of training for the Vietnamese armed forces.¹²³ The routine of the Ordnance School in the conduct of its program of instruction continued relatively undisturbed in 1972, despite the NGUYEN HUE Offensive in the spring.

(C) As the American withdrawal proceeded, US Army teams from the Tank-Automotive Command and the Weapons Command initiated training in September for Ordnance School instructors on new equipment. This effort was made to prepare the Ordnance School to train Vietnamese specialists on equipment that was arriving under Project ENHANCE.¹²⁴

Transportation School

(U) The Transportation School had its beginnings in 1954 when a highway transport officers' basic course was organized and conducted at the Thu Duc Reserve Officers Training Center. In 1958 it was moved to its present location at the Quang Trung Training Center. The school's mission remained essentially the same as when the school was formed and had an annual training capacity of 700 students.¹²⁵

(U) During 1972 the Transportation School continued to expand to meet the increased demands placed upon it by Vietnamization of the war effort. An additional training facility was established at Go Vap to conduct second echelon vehicle maintenance training.¹²⁶

Medical School

(U) The Medical School was first established in

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1951 in Hanoi to provide the Vietnamese Medical Battalion under French command with its first formal medical training capability. It was moved to Saigon and officially renamed the Military Medical School in 1961. Shortly thereafter, planning was instituted to construct a modern facility which would enable the school to meet the increasing medical requirements of the expanding RVNAF. This facility, constructed in Saigon, was completed and operational in April 1964. Its mission was to train regular medical officers, pharmacists, dentists, enlisted medics, and non-commissioned medical specialists.¹²⁷

(U) In 1972 the Military Medical School continued its program of improvement and modernization. In the third quarter of calendar year 1972 the school completed the program of instruction for a basic course for preventive medicine officers.¹²⁸ Due to the excellent operation of the Military Medical School during 1972 the advisory effort was reduced gradually to encourage even greater self-sufficiency. During November a total review and revision of the program of instruction was begun at the school, the first total review in several years. Primary emphasis of the review was the change from a preponderance of lectures to a greater emphasis of hands-on training and less on theory. A further objective was to integrate management training as much as possible.¹²⁹

Language School

(U) The Vietnamese Armed Forces Language School was opened in Saigon in June 1966 with the mission of teaching English to Vietnamese who were programmed to attend offshore schooling in the United States. At that time its student capacity was 1,000. In July 1967, at the height of the American buildup in Vietnam, the school doubled its student strength by increasing its facilities and operating in two shifts. Because the American presence was so great and the knowledge needed to use the American equipment and books given to the Vietnamese was primarily contained in works written in the English language, the mission of the school was expanded to include the training of Vietnamese translators for requirements within the Republic of Vietnam. As the Vietnamese armed forces expanded and the requirement for offshore training in the United States became greater, the school expanded its facilities until it had a capacity for 5,000 students at the end of 1968.¹³⁰

(U) In 1972 Vietnamization of the Armed Forces Language School progressed rapidly. In January, for the first time in the history of the school, the number of Vietnamese instructors in the classroom exceeded the number of American instructors. By the end of the month, nearly two-thirds of the instructor strength was Vietnamese. The language school also provided support to other institutions

in the service school system. In March the two Vietnamese junior military schools located at Vung Tau and Pleiku requested and received assistance from the Armed Forces Language School with their English language programs.

(U) As Vietnamization of the school proceeded through the year, there was some concern over the great reduction in the number of American instructors. The school feared that this decrease would affect the ability of the school to consistently produce graduates above the 65 English comprehension level that their subsequent training would require. Steps were taken to monitor that potential problem very closely. In August the school commandant agreed to the assignment of the remaining American Defense Language Institute staff members to individual Vietnamese staff evaluators in order that they might daily coordinate their efforts to maintain high academic standards.¹³¹ During the fourth quarter Vietnamese instructors temporarily replaced US military instructors until US civilian (Defense Language Institute) instructors arrived. As of 1 December 1972 all US military enlisted personnel assigned to the field advisory element had been withdrawn.¹³²

Offshore Training Program

(U) A related effort to improve the educational level of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam was the Offshore Training Program. Participants in this program were sent to the United States for training in American service schools and civilian universities. Upon their return they utilized their acquired skills while serving in the ARVN. During calendar year 1972 the program progressed as scheduled. A summary of the FY 72/73 Offshore Training Program as of January 1973 follows:¹³³

	FY 72	FY 73
Approved	847	418
Completed	815 (96.2%)	40 (11.0%)
In Progress	32 (3.8%)	192 (45.9%)
Total	847 (100.0%)	238 (56.9%)

(U) Throughout calendar year 1972 several points emerged as a result of the experience of the Vietnamese service school system. In the first place, it was flexible and responsive to the national emergency following the opening days of the enemy offensive. At the same time the essential continuity was maintained for the resumption of smooth functioning when the crisis subsided. In the second place, at no school was the course of instruction entirely disrupted. In the case of some, training was intensified, particularly at the Infantry School and the Command and Staff College where courses were accelerated in order to put more trained offi-

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cers into the combat units more quickly. Finally, the ability to react to the situation in this manner indicated that the Vietnamese military service school system was viable and fully capable of operating in a self-sufficient manner upon completion of the American advisory effort in early 1973.

FANK TRAINING, IMPROVEMENT, AND MODERNIZATION

(C) Another major task performed by the MACV Training Directorate and its successor, the Army Advisory Group, was the training of the forces of the Khmer Republic (FANK). This program was accomplished primarily at training centers within South Vietnam. Begun in 1970, this training program had considerable success. In 1971, 31 Khmer battalions were trained in Vietnam and returned to the Khmer Republic, in addition to several hundred individual specialists. The program for FANK training from the beginning included instruction in command and leadership, combined arms, security, intelligence, and weapons, in addition to pilot, technical specialist, naval, air force, and basic army unit training.¹³⁴

(U) To accomplish the necessary training, the FANK Training Command was organized with a headquarters and support element at Bien Hoa. Three individual training battalions were organized, one in Military Region 2 and two in Military Region 3.¹³⁵

(C) This was not completely an American operation, however; the Vietnamese Army and Navy were also involved in training Khmer forces. The Army concentrated on training regional infantry companies while the Navy worked with the prospective crews for boats destined for riverine operations. Various other American and Vietnamese agencies were involved with certain types of specialist training as well.¹³⁶

(C) American and Vietnamese training of the forces of the Khmer Republic was disrupted by the NGUYEN HUE Offensive and the ensuing operational requirements for FANK forces in the Khmer Republic. Six battalions under the FY 72 program completed training in April and returned to the Khmer Republic for combat deployment. Two other battalions were called back to the Khmer Republic before their training was complete because of the battlefield emergency there. The redeployment battalions were not replaced because they were needed to halt the enemy advance. By the end of April only five battalions remained in training. On 10 April, 16 FANK regional infantry companies completed their training at Lam Son National Training Center. These troops were replaced by other regional infantry units whose training was subsequently completed

June. They were replaced by 16 more companies in the same month. This final increment was the

last of the regional infantry groups that were programmed for training in FY 72. By the end of the quarter, five more FANK battalions had deployed to the Khmer Republic, one of which had not completed its training. The total number of Khmer battalions that had completed their training through the end of the second quarter of calendar year 1972 stood at 66. In May the number of battalions still in training had dropped to four; this rose to nine by the end of June, and training levels in general were back to normal for the remainder of the year. In conjunction with the cease-fire in Vietnam, the training of FANK personnel was terminated by both the US and FANK on 28 January 1973.

(C) FANK support by US forces was concentrated on the training of mobile combat battalions at three sites: Long Hai, Phuoc Tuy, and Dong Ba Thin Training Centers. Eighty-five battalions were trained from 1970 through 1972. The Long Hai and Phuoc Tuy FANK training sites were closed and turned over to ARVN at the end of November. Twelve battalions were programmed to be trained at Dong Ba Thin during 1973. The first three battalions were undergoing training at the time of the cease-fire. Under this program the US trained approximately 40,600 individuals.

(C) FANK support by RVNAF was concentrated on the training of infantry companies at Lam Son and engineer companies at Phu Cuong. Two armored cavalry troops, 256 infantry companies, and 16 engineer companies were trained from 1970 to 1972; 50 infantry and ten engineer companies were programmed to be trained in 1973. Eight infantry companies had completed training by 28 January 1973. ARVN also trained five infantry battalions and one engineer battalion in 1972. Under this unit training program ARVN trained approximately 37,000 individuals.

(C) FANK specialist training in Vietnam was, for the most part, conducted by US and RVNAF trainers. A total of 6,145 individual specialists were trained from 1970 through 1972. The US and RVNAF had planned to train 1,186 specialists during 1973. As of January 1973, 243 specialists had completed training and 553 were in training. The total number of FANK trained as of 28 January 1973 was 84,004. Annex F discusses other aspects of assistance to the Khmer Republic.

THE COMBAT ARMS COMMANDS

(U) Before the reorganization of the army advisory effort on 15 May 1972 the advisory teams for the Armor, Artillery, and Ranger Commands reported directly to the MACV Director of Training. The reorganization placed an intermediate point of contact between them and the new Chief, Army Advisory Group. This was the Combined Arms Direc-

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torate, a part of AAG headquarters. There was no change in mission for the advisory teams, however. The advisory team for the Airborne Division was also brought under the control of the Combined Arms Directorate.

Armor Command

(C) The personnel of the Armor Command advisory detachment spent much of their time making inspection, coordination, and orientation visits to Vietnamese armor units and their American advisors throughout the Republic of Vietnam. Their concerns were primarily training, operations, administration, and logistics. After the 1972 offensive they were involved in Project ENHANCE for the Vietnamese armor forces.¹⁸⁷

(C) As a result of the intense fighting in April, logistics became a key area for the Armor Command and its American advisors. The most critical area was the lack of timely reports from the field on personnel and equipment losses. This weakness was present in both advisor and Vietnamese channels. By the end of April the reporting of equipment losses had improved so that the time lag was reduced from five to two days. Reporting of personnel losses remained poor through April.¹⁸⁸

(C) In May the efforts of the Armor Command and its American advisors were primarily directed toward refitting and retraining of battered Vietnamese armor units. In June the retraining and refitting emphasis of the Armor Command continued. The training of specialists in the areas of maintenance, communications, medicine, and administration was slow and unresponsive to the urgent replacement requirements. These unmet needs, coupled with the shortage of non-commissioned officers, created serious problems in restoring armor units to combat effectiveness.

(C) Tank gun ammunition remained in short supply in some units but was not critical. Logistical support—including supply, maintenance, and transportation—continued to improve in June as the momentum of the enemy offensive slowed.¹⁸⁹

(C) In the third quarter of calendar year 1972 retraining of armor units progressed well. A meeting between representatives of MACV and the Joint General Staff in July resulted in the activation of two new tank regiments, the 21st and 22d. Training began on 1 August. The two units were equipped under Project ENHANCE. By direction of the Joint General Staff, the Armor Command was tasked with the responsibility for forming, equipping, and training the new regiments.¹⁹⁰

(C) Reconstitution of personnel and equipment losses sustained in the two previous quarters resulted in all operational battalions achieving a high

degree of combat readiness by the end of the year.¹⁴¹

Artillery Command

(C) The Vietnamese Artillery Command and its American advisory detachment were concerned primarily with the activation and training of new artillery units during the first quarter of calendar year 1972.¹⁴²

(C) During the second quarter emphasis was placed on completing the training of these newly activated units for whose equipage, training, and manning, the Artillery Command was responsible. A new focus was the reconstitution of those Vietnamese artillery units that had suffered heavily during the first weeks of the enemy offensive, particularly in Military Region 1. Reconstitution of personnel was accomplished by reassigning experienced personnel from other units and drawing officers and non-commissioned officers from a pool of new graduates of the Artillery School. Unit materiel was replaced with equipment from ARVN assets and airlift of critical items from outside Vietnam.

(C) Nine US Army targeting assistance teams arrived in Vietnam in May, with the mission of training the Vietnamese in the exploitation of target data from all sources and to establish counter-mortar/battery information centers (CBICs). The teams conducted crater analysis classes at various sites throughout Vietnam; acceptance by the Vietnamese and their American advisors was generally favorable.

(C) An American artillery school survey team arrived in Vietnam in June to conduct a survey of the Vietnamese Artillery School in order to improve the school and determine if the US Field Artillery School could further assist its Vietnamese counterpart.¹⁴³

(C) During the third quarter of 1972, the Artillery Command continued to focus on training new artillery units. Reconstitution of shattered battalions was completed and they were redeployed for combat operations.

Ranger Command

(C) The personnel of the Ranger Command advisory detachment and their Vietnamese counterparts were involved in making inspection, coordination, and orientation visits to the various ranger units scattered throughout Vietnam. After the offensive began, they were concerned with retraining and reconstitution of those battalions that had borne the brunt of the fighting.

(C) On 6 January 1972 GEN Vien, the Chief of the Joint General Staff, approved a plan for a reorganization of the Ranger Command. The major

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thrust of the reorganization was the standardization of ranger group headquarters and battalions and activation, inactivation, and conversion of other units.¹⁴⁴

(C) The brigade concept, approved by the Joint General Staff and then suspended from implementation, was superseded by a study recommending a complete reorganization of the Ranger Command. The reorganization would increase the number of groups from seven to 15, eliminate five tactical command posts, reduce the number of battalions from 54 to 45, add a reconnaissance company to each group, and standardize the organization of the ranger battalions. The entire reorganization would be accomplished with all assets and resources available to the Ranger Command. The study remained under consideration by JGS.

(C) Also under consideration was the organization of a 165-man ARVN Strategic Tactical Detachment which would greatly enhance the ranger ability to obtain intelligence about the enemy. J7 (Special Security Technical Branch) was given a draft proposal of how this unit should be organized to fit the ranger organization. Approval for the formation of this unit was ultimately expected from JGS.¹⁴⁵

Airborne Division

(C) On 15 May 1972 the responsibility for the advisory effort with the Vietnamese Army's Airborne Division was transferred to the Combined Arms Directorate of the Army Advisory Group when the latter organization was formally established. The relationship of the Airborne Division Assistance Team (ADAT) and the Army Advisory Group was similar to the one between the advisory elements to the combat arm commands; however, the ADAT had the additional responsibility of coordinating and directing American air assets supporting the Air-

borne Division, to include transport and armed helicopters, tactical aircraft, and medical evacuation helicopters.¹⁴⁶

(C) At the time of the reorganization of MACV Training Directorate into the Army Advisory Group in the middle of May the Airborne Division was committed with its 2d and 3d Brigades in counter-offensive operations in northern Military Region 1. The division remained committed in Military Region 1 for the remainder of the year.¹⁴⁷

(C) Use of American equipment within the division was generally good. In some instances all available weapons were not employed. Progress was made to overcome outdated concepts of tactical operations in an era of the war when unlimited helicopter, tactical aircraft, and B-52 support were no longer available. The American advisory team, however, observed that the maintenance effort within the division continued to be a problem, particularly after March, when the division was deployed from Saigon.

(C) The combat operations conducted by the division were primarily offensive in nature. While casualties decreased considerably from what they had been, the level of combat continued to keep the combat maneuver units operating at approximately two-thirds strength despite a steady stream of replacements. Experienced combat leadership in the officer and non-commissioned officer ranks continued to be a problem.¹⁴⁸

(C) Under consideration was the organization of a 165-man ARVN Strategic Tactical Detachment, similar to that proposed for the Ranger Command, which would greatly enhance the airborne capability in obtaining intelligence about the enemy. Approval for the formation of this unit was ultimately expected from JGS.

NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

(U) During 1972, the US Navy removed the last of its in-country personnel from an operational combat role. As US sailors relinquished their combat roles, they became advisors, teachers, and technicians. With the exception of the Seventh Fleet offshore and some miscellaneous support units located in Vietnam, almost all the remaining US Navy personnel in Vietnam were attached to the Naval Advisory Group (NAG). Charged with the mission of training and advising the Vietnamese Navy (VNN), the NAG began the year with a strength of over 2,800 men under the command of RADM Robert S. Salzer. By 30 June, when he was succeeded by RADM Arthur W. Price, the NAG had been reduced to about 1,400 men. On 25 August RADM James B. Wilson assumed command of the

NAG, which continued its drawdown until the strength at the end of January 1973 was approximately 775 men.¹⁴⁹

(U) From its inception in April 1961, the Vietnamese Navy grew from a small patrol and paramilitary junk force to a navy of over 1,700 ships and craft and more than 41,000 personnel. During 1971 and 1972 the VNN assumed full responsibility for conducting the riverine and coastal patrol operations formerly conducted by the US Navy. This rapid growth in personnel and equipment was accompanied by some unavoidable growing pains. The Vietnamese Navy was supplied with highly sophisticated military equipment and introduced to complicated procedures for preventive and operational maintenance. In addition, a new and complex

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logistics support network was created. It was vital for the VNN to continue to receive the help and support of the Naval Advisory Group until it could adjust to these changes and integrate the new systems into an effective organization. Moreover, the US Navy also continued to bear a responsibility for ensuring that the vast amount of American materiel turned over to the Vietnamese was properly used and adequately maintained.¹⁰⁰

(U) The Naval Advisory Group experienced the same manpower problems encountered by other MACV elements during the drawdown. As a result, the advisor found more and more responsibilities thrust upon him while the need to teach, instruct, and assist continued undiminished.

NAG ORGANIZATION

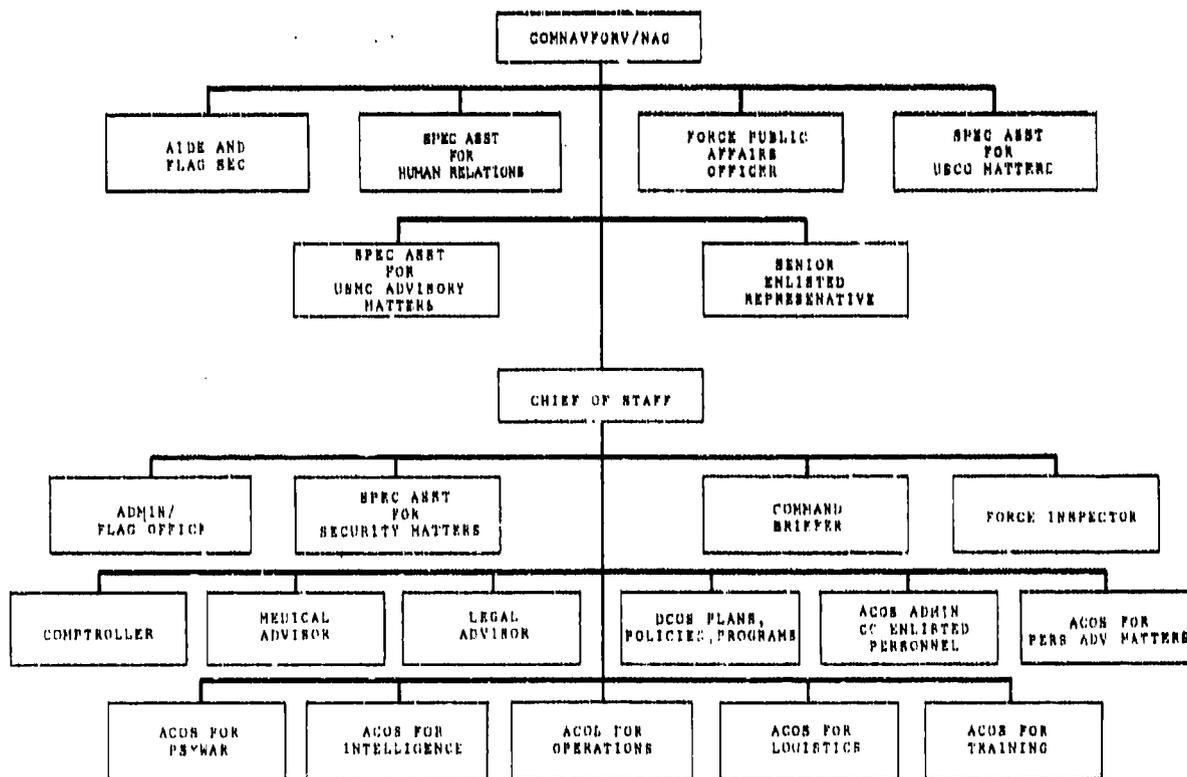
(U) Subordinate to the Chief of the Naval Advisory Group were a total of nine naval advisory units, one advisory element, and eight advisory

teams at various locations throughout Vietnam. The overall structure of the advisory group is shown in Figures C-12 and C-13. Together, these organizational structures were used to control the naval advisory effort in South Vietnam.¹⁰¹ At the end of January 1973, The Rach Gia team was disestablished.¹⁰²

VIETNAMESE NAVY (VNN) ORGANIZATION

(C) The Vietnamese Chief of Naval Operations, RADM Tran Van Chon, exercised operational control of the VNN through two principal deputies: the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Sea Operations and the Deputy Commander for TRAN HUNG DAO (RIVERINE) Campaigns. Each of these deputies, in turn, exercised operational control over those forces made available to coastal surveillance and riverine operational commanders by the various administrative commanders (Fig. C-14.)

NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP ORGANIZATION



Source: COMNAVFORV

Figure: C-12

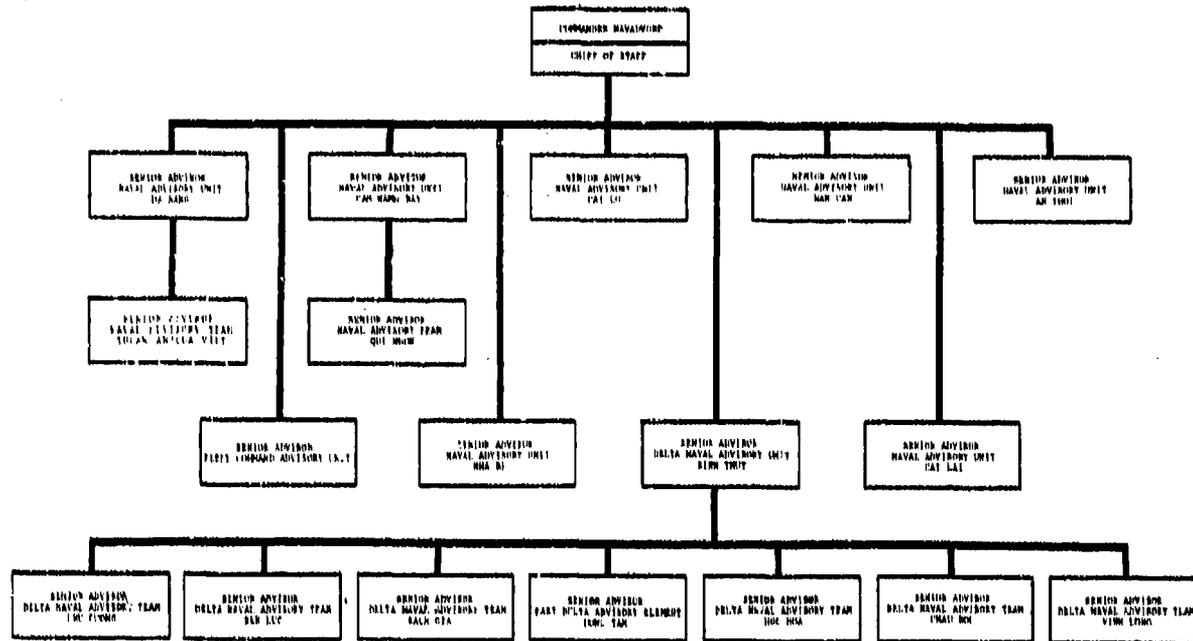
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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP-FIELD ORGANIZATION



Source: NAG

Figure C-13

(C) The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Sea Operations, Commodore Nguyen Huu Chi, located in Saigon, exercised operational command of the coastal surveillance effort through his five coastal zone commands, Task Forces 231 through 235, which covered the coast in Military Regions 1 through 4.

(C) The Deputy Commander for TRAN HUNG DAO Campaigns, Commodore Dinh Manh Hung, located at Binh Thuy, exercised operational command of all riverine operations in Military Regions 3 and 4 and controlled the campaigns through nine subordinate commanders.¹⁰⁸

(C) Figure C-15 shows the types of ships and craft included in the Vietnamese Navy inventory as of 31 January 1973.

BACKGROUND

(S) The VNN grew from approximately 19,000 personnel in late 1968 to slightly more than 41,000 as of 1 December 1972. At that time, the officer

strength was at 89 percent of the authorized officer ceiling and NCO strength was at 82 percent of its ceiling. Overall personnel strength had climbed to 105 percent of the authorized FY 73 force level of 39,735 but was being reduced through normal attrition at the average rate of 125 men per month.

(S) Officer strength was expected to attain the FY 73 authorization by December 1974, and NCO strength was expected to be attained during 1973. The principal personnel problem was the lack of middle and upper level management personnel in both the NCO and the officer ranks. Four-fifths of the officers were concentrated in the grades O2 and below, whereas the allowance called for about half to be in these grades. Further, most of these officers had less than three years of experience. The additional experience and training required would take time.

(S) Compared to other RVNAF elements, the VNN record for unauthorized absence and desertion was favorable. A factor that bore heavily in reduc-

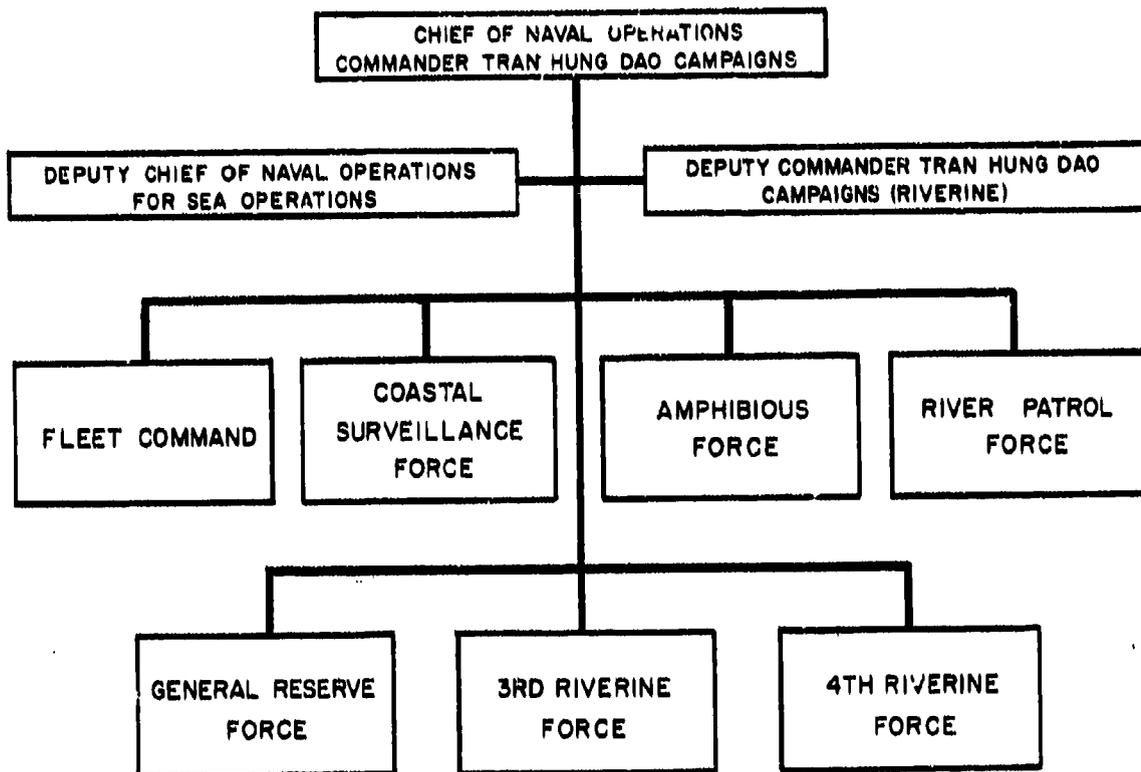
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VIETNAMESE NAVY ORGANIZATION



Source: NAG

Figure: C-14

VNN SHIPS & CRAFT

TYPE	TOTAL BUILT & TURNED OVER	PRE-ACTOV*	ACTOV*	FRENCH	VNN	ON HAND
Coastal Surveillance & Outer Barrier.....	29	12	11			18
Inner Barrier.....	488	25	137		320	398
Harbor Defense.....	126	1	101	25		110
Riverine.....	840	185	597	40	6	745
Logistic Support						
Repair.....	17	8	14			17
Long Lift.....	27	20	7			24
Short Lift.....	100	70	90			127
Utility.....	73	9	60	4		69
Miscellaneous.....	27	22	5			26
TOTAL.....	1781	346	1022	75	392	1529

*ACTOV=Accelerated turnover of assets to the VNN

Source: NAVADVGRP

Figure: C-15

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ing the desertion rate was the VNN's increasing ability to provide for the welfare of its men through the dependent shelter program.

DEPENDENT SHELTER PROGRAM

(U) The COMNAVFORV sponsored dependent shelter program began in January 1970 and was funded at 3.5 million dollars. When completed, it would provide 5,184 units of dependent shelters and 85 community facilities such as schools and market places. About 1,000 shelters were assigned to the Vietnamese Marine Corps at Thu Duc with the remainder allotted to the VNN at 39 sites. A total of 4,419 dependent shelters and 27 schools and community facilities were completed by 1978, and 458 units were under construction. The program was scheduled to be completed by November 1978.¹⁰⁴

FORCE STRUCTURE

(S) The VNN intermediate force structure plan was developed to counter the anticipated enemy threat in coastal and riverine areas during the five year period FY 74 to FY 78. During this period coastal forces were expected to include 17 outer barrier ships and an inner barrier fleet averaging 314 patrol and surveillance craft. Riverine and logistics assets would be allowed to decline through attrition.

(S) The primary goals of the mid-range plan were to provide stabilization of VNN strength in the blue water and coastal surveillance areas and to develop the requisite logistic support capability. It was anticipated that the riverine forces would be absorbed into Territorial Forces or the maritime units of the National Police.

(S) Consistent with the mid-range plan, there was proposed a long-range, post-hostilities plan that emphasized coastal surveillance and blue water assets. The riverine force was to be severely reduced on the assumption that riverine duties would be assumed by Territorial and National Police Forces. The token riverine force retained within the VNN after hostilities would serve mainly as a reserve or reaction force to be used in the event the guerrilla movement exceeded the control capability of police forces.

(S) VNN manpower would decline slightly in the mid-range plan primarily because of riverine craft attrition. The post hostility manpower level would decline to 28,500, including a 5,000 man VNN reserve force.

(S) The outlook for attrition replacement of VNN craft was very austere. The PF-107 class patrol frigate (PF) was identified as a replacement craft for the aging VNN blue water patrol craft (PCE). Two of the PFs were included in the FY 74 MASF Program approved by CINCPAC at a cost of US \$11 million per ship. Additional construction was

planned for inclusion at a rate of two per year until all eight PCEs were replaced on a one-for-one basis. While the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) had not completed final action on the programming of the PFs, approval was anticipated. Since a two-year procurement lead time existed, actual delivery of PFs to VNN was not expected to begin prior to FY 76.

(S) A desired force of 100 fast patrol craft (PCF) for the inner barrier was projected for both the intermediate and post-hostility periods. Commencing in FY 75, two PCF were programmed each year as attrition replacements. It was proposed that the CNO approve that part of the FY 75 MASF Program which provided for acquisition of these craft at a cost of US \$200,000 each.

(S) In view of the possible shift from MASF to MAP funding, it was decided to leave open the in-country ferrocement coastal raider building program. The program, to be completed in FY 75, had the ceiling for the craft increased from 60 to 150. While these raiders were originally planned as an attrition replacement for the Yabuza and command junks, it was also found desirable to use the coastal raider to replace the aging harbor defense picket boats. The ferrocement boat had a distinct advantage as an attrition replacement because it could be constructed in-country. There were no plans to replace riverine craft. Most of these units were to be transferred to the maritime police or Territorial Forces, along with the riverine security mission.¹⁰⁵

COASTAL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

(S/NF) The mission of the Coastal Surveillance Force was to interdict seaborne infiltration and coastal transshipment of enemy personnel and material into South Vietnam and to support ground forces with transportation and naval gunfire support.

(S/NF) The coastal surveillance system was an integrated complex of coastal surveillance centers, coastal radar stations, ships, craft, VARS aircraft, and headquarters elements. The system was composed of six coastal surveillance centers, 16 coastal radar stations, 17 assigned blue water ships, and 379 patrol craft and coastal junks. The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, Sea Operations Command, exercised operational control of the system from the Naval Operations Center, Saigon through his five coastal zone commanders. The coastal zone commander exercised command and control over his assets through the coastal surveillance center. The coastal surveillance system consisted of three barriers.

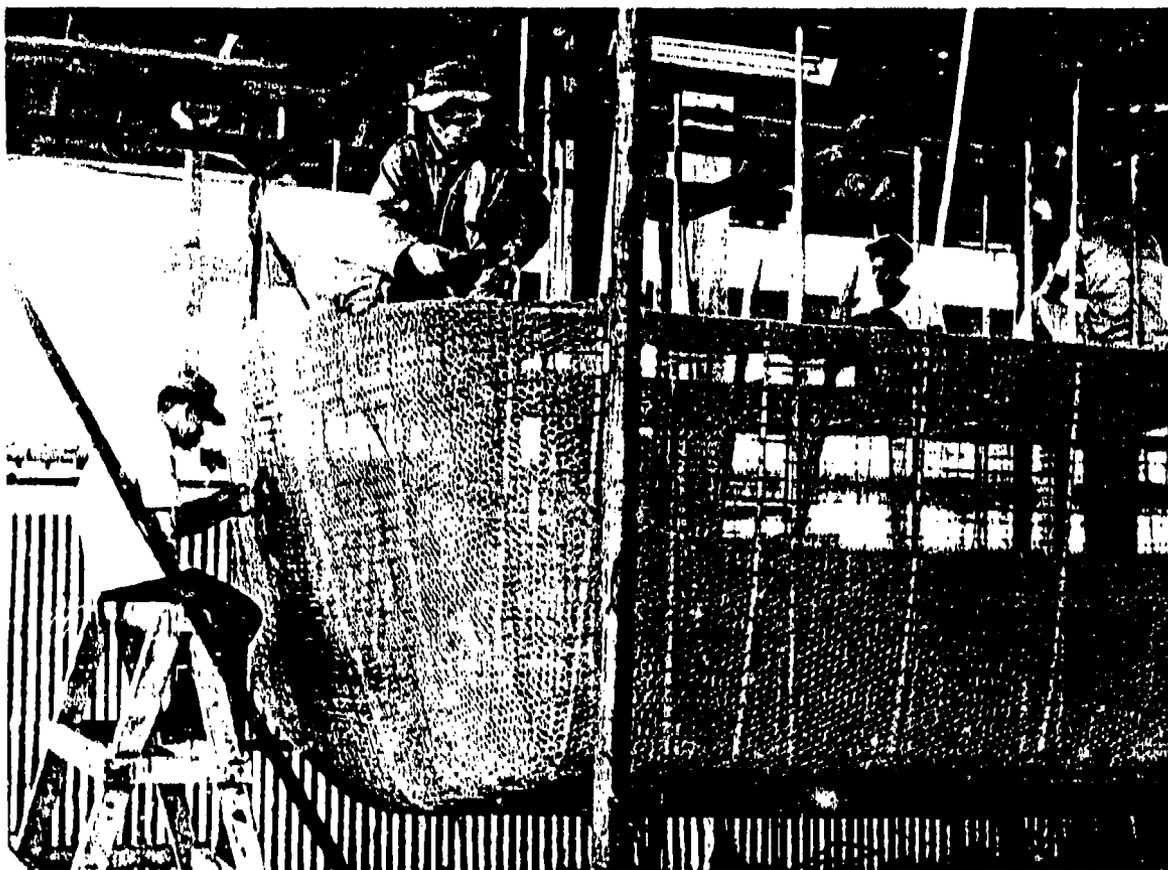
(S/NF) The air barrier, the outermost of the three barriers, was manned by US Seventh Fleet

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Ferracement coastal raiders were constructed by the Vietnamese at a fraction of the cost of comparable metal hulled raiders.

maritime aircraft. The function of this barrier was to provide early detection, identification, and tracking of infiltration trawlers. This function was programmed to be assumed by a VNAF squadron of C-119s; however, in February 1973 MACV recommended that the proposed squadron be deleted from the VNAF force structure. With the reduction of the US maritime surveillance flights which supplemented the outer barrier, the previously high degree of effectiveness of the VNN Coastal Surveillance System was reduced to about 75 percent, the mathematically predicted figure.

(S/NF) The outer barrier extended from 12 to 40 miles off the RVN coast and was patrolled by the blue water fleet. The function of the outer barrier was to provide a ready reaction force against infiltration trawlers. The Operation MARKET TIME review for 1972 identified nine outer barrier stations which would be manned by VNN blue water ships

(Fig. C-16). These stations were in areas where the threat of infiltration was high and coastal radar coverage was weak. The operation schedule employed during the high threat period from September 1972 to January 1973 provided 10 of the 17 blue water ships for patrol.

(S/NF) The inner barrier extended from the South Vietnamese coast seaward 12 miles. The Vietnamese coastline from the Demilitarized Zone to the Cambodian border was divided into 52 patrol areas of about 20 miles each. The function of the inner barrier patrol craft and bunks was to counter infiltration from the outer barrier and prevent enemy coastal transshipment. The VNN maintained an average of 84 PCFs/WPBs on patrol daily during the 1972 offensive. In addition, twenty coastal groups, consisting of Yabuta junks and coastal raiders, supplemented the inner barrier patrol craft.

(S/NF) The threat posed against the Vietnamese

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legal entry points. It remained to be seen whether the legal entry points would be sufficient to satisfy NVA/VC resupply needs. The North was also likely to test the effectiveness of the Coastal Surveillance System by attempting to land supplies where not expected, to include armaments, munitions, and other war materiel. The discovery of the first landing of civilian supplies by trawlers was expected to create a situation involving protests, negotiations, and claims concerning territorial water rights off PRG-held areas of the South Vietnamese coast. After a few enemy successes it was anticipated that trawler infiltration of materiel which could not be justified on the basis of one-for-one replacement would then commence. In that event a logical NVN resupply/infiltration tactic would be to load a trawler with selected war materiel which could be brought into a designated entry point legally but to direct it to attempt to infiltrate. If the trawler was intercepted during an attempt to land in an illegal area, it might abort to a legal entry point.

(S/NF) The recent addition of Komar Class PTGs to the North Vietnamese Navy added a new dimension to the threat, highlighting the ability of the enemy to increase his naval strength. The continued increase of North Vietnam's naval capability created a potential for at-sea engagements not considered likely in the past because of the US naval presence in the South China Sea and Gulf of Tonkin.

(S/NF) This overall appraisal of the VNN Coastal surveillance capability was based upon the result of the formal studies, evaluations summarized below, and an analysis of operational data. Major shortfalls and problem areas requiring corrective action are discussed below.

(S/NF) Since April 1972 there had been no detections of steel hulled trawlers by the Coastal Surveillance System, none detected by US maritime air patrols covering the South China Sea, and no intelligence reports of infiltration by steel hulled trawlers into South Vietnam. In this respect the system was very efficient. Exercise data included in the second operational evaluation of the Coastal Radar System published 19 October 1972, specifically the FILTER KING Exercise results, showed that between 1 March 1972 and 15 July 1972 the coordination of the radar, Coastal Surveillance Centers, and inner barrier ships was such that 68 percent of the exercise infiltrators were intercepted and identified. The postulated effectiveness of this portion of the system, based on a mathematical model developed before the system became fully operational, was 77 percent. FILTER KING Exercises conducted after July 1972 showed that this portion of the system was operating even better than anticipated. Exercise results for December

1972 showed that the VNN effected successful intercept on 87 percent of all exercise infiltrators.

(S/NF) Blue water ships had an operational readiness rate of 87 per cent, and coastal patrol craft had an operational readiness rate of 86 per cent. Based on past performance the VNN had the capability to maintain this state of readiness. The VNN demonstrated its ability to prevent overt, major resupply efforts by the enemy from the sea. However, the lower level of infiltration and transshipment that reportedly occurred undetected by the naval barrier forces represented a deficiency in VNN capability. The planned curtailment of US P-3 aircraft would degrade the detection phase of infiltration interdiction. Except for maritime air, the VNN had the capability to provide and deploy forces as necessary to contain the infiltration and transshipment threat within levels recently experienced. The threat posed by a growing North Vietnamese Navy could be successfully countered by the development of combined VNN and VNAF coordinated tactics.

(C) In November 1972 after the last USN surveillance flight was flown, VNAF aircraft took over the mission. However, because of limited assets and the low priority assigned to this mission, the desired degree of support was not achieved, although the number of VNAF VARS flights did increase in November after direct intervention by the VNN CNO.

(C) The number of areas covered by US maritime air patrols in 1972 varied from a maximum of five to a minimum of two in areas EAS and DG1 shown in Figure C-16. The flight paths shown in this figure were designed so that a trawler attempting to cross the area at a speed of 15 knots could not avoid being swept at least once by the searching aircraft. The search area was sufficiently wide so that it required only one sweep per day to obtain the desired early detection, identification, and tracking of infiltrating trawlers.

(S) VNAF was tasked to develop the capability to fly these maritime air patrols and subsequently to assume responsibility for the offshore air barrier. Although aircraft for this mission were in country, they required modification as well as trained pilots and navigators to be useful for flying maritime air patrols. Problems and delays caused the planned activation date of mid-1974 to slip by at least 20 months to early 1976.

(C) In April 1972 a North Vietnamese trawler was detected offshore by US forces, tracked for 11 days, and finally sunk by VNN blue water ships. There were no known instances of successful infiltration by trawlers during 1972.¹⁰⁰

(S) On 27 January, in the flurry of activity that preceded the cease-fire, Coastal Radar Station 201

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The tactical operations center at Nho Be Navy Base monitored coastal surveillance in the Rung Sat Special Zone.

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at Degi was overrun by enemy forces. It was recaptured on 5 February; however, the radar had been extensively damaged and was expected to be out of operation for 6 to 8 weeks. To compensate for the gap thus created in the coastal radar envelope, additional blue water patrol units were maintained in the Degi-Sa Huynh area, and Seventh Fleet maritime air patrols were shifted northward by 120 miles.

Coastal Surveillance System Evaluation

(C) During the period from 1 March to 15 July, an operational evaluation of the Coastal Radar Surveillance System was conducted. The object of this study was to appraise the ability of the Coastal Radar System to detect, track, and report suspicious contacts and conduct an intercept with coastal surveillance craft against infiltrating and transiting trawler contacts. Although the study revealed that a suspicious contact had a high probability of being intercepted by friendly forces, the overall system appeared to have lower initial detection ranges than those predicted. This caused concern that the system might be falling short of its designed objectives to provide continuous coverage along the coast of Vietnam. As a result of this finding, a joint USN/VNN team studied the Da Nang radar site in November. Analysis disclosed that the problem was not in the design or equipment, but rather a result of operating procedures in use at the radar site and at the Coastal Surveillance Center. In concert with these evaluations of the Coastal Radar System, Operation KIBITZER was conducted during the month of September to evaluate the VNN's effectiveness in interdicting seaborne infiltration and coastal transshipment in the Delta. KIBITZER showed that marked improvement in counter-infiltration efforts by the VNN was required in order to accomplish the mission of coastal patrol forces. It was further determined that the desired results could be obtained with the assets already available to the VNN by the application of better patrol techniques and greater aggressiveness on the part of VNN personnel.¹⁵⁷

DEEP WATER OPERATIONS

(S) In blue water operations, several significant events occurred. On 30 June 1972, operational control of the outer barrier in the Third Coastal Zone was transferred to the VNN, thus completing the turnover of all Operation MARKET TIME areas. Two US Navy ships remained in support of the coastal surveillance operation until 15 December. On that date the last two US Navy surface units attached to Task Force 115 departed Vietnamese waters, terminating one of the longest continual US Navy operations of the Vietnam war.¹⁵⁸

NOTIFICATION LINE

(S) After Seventh Fleet aircraft mined ports and coastal waters of North Vietnam, a notification line operation commenced. It used dedicated ships to inform merchantmen enroute to North Vietnamese ports of the presence of mines. On 14 May the first VNN ship began independent notification line operations in the southern portion of the Gulf of Tonkin. On 18 May a joint USN/VNN notification line was established with VNN ships participating for a total of 114 days from 14 May until 12 September.

GUNFIRE SUPPORT

(C) Units of the VNN also participated in naval gunfire support (NGFS) from the start of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. Due to the limited capability of the gunfire control systems installed in VNN ships, NGFS provided by the VNN was either harassment and interdiction (H&I) or direct fire missions. In a typical mission, Vietnamese patrol craft assisted USN destroyers in providing gunfire support in defense of the Naval Base at Cua Viet in early April. Complete gun damage assessment (GDA) was not available; however, during the spring offensive, GDA credited to the VNN included: 854 KIA, 22 houses and 85 huts destroyed, 17 rice storage dumps destroyed, 167 foxholes and 190 meters of trench destroyed.¹⁵⁹

ADVISORY EMPHASIS

(C) Prior to April 1972, the Fleet Command Advisory Unit devoted most of its efforts to the areas of gunnery, Operation MARKET TIME procedures, operations, general seamanship, and ship-handling to insure that the VNN fleet met its expanding wartime commitments. As those capabilities were achieved, the advisory emphasis shifted to the goal of instilling pride and professionalism and improving internal maintenance and logistical procedures that would enable Fleet Command units to conduct efficient and effective operations in the future.¹⁶⁰

PROBLEM AREAS FACED BY ADVISORS AT FLEET COMMAND

(C) The following problem areas were addressed by advisors in 1972:

—The absence of an operational employment schedule prevented advance planning for overhauls and availabilities. As a result, ships were on patrol for indeterminate periods of time, resulting in a consequent reduction of morale. Due to excessive breakdowns, lack of routine self-maintenance, and a non-availability of repair parts in deployment areas, the fleet experienced an operational availability rate of less than 50 percent.

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—An employment schedule that included 67 of 81 ships of the blue water fleet was implemented in September 1972. With a firm schedule, ships prepared work packages for overhauls and availabilities well in advance, and effective planning and budgeting by yard and fleet commanders became possible. Ships, experiencing timely relief during the patrol cycle, gained improved morale, conducted self-maintenance on a regular basis, and obtained improved availability of spare parts. The operational readiness rate averaged 71 percent for fourth quarter, 1972.

—In the field of technical management, no fiscal responsibility for overhauls and repairs had been assigned the Vietnamese Fleet Commander. Late in 1972 after he was assigned fund control responsibility, the Fleet Commander established a budget allocating funds for overhaul and repair. The immediate effect was a more timely submission of work requests and an improved advance planning capability.

—Proper engineering practices were not being used, resulting in unnecessary equipment failure. Accordingly, sound engineering practices were emphasized throughout the advisory organization. Joint VNN/USN assistance and repair teams visited each ship when it returned to port and the specific results of poor engineering practices were identified to all levels of command. Operational availability and endurance of Fleet Command ships increased significantly as the operators began to appreciate the benefits available from following good engineering practices.

—The VNN had an extremely limited ship's repair capability. After joint training/repair assistance teams were established and began to visit Fleet Command ships, a noticeable increase in ship's repair capability occurred. This improvement was evidenced by a decrease in the number of work requests submitted for repair of facilities, an increase in the number of repair parts requisitioned by Fleet Command ships, and by an increase in the operational readiness of Fleet Command ships.

—Poor damage control practices were observed on board Fleet Command ships. Joint USN/VNN damage control assistance teams were established to inspect and instruct ship's force personnel in correct procedures and to aid them in requisitioning replacements for deficient equipment. Seventy-five ships of the fleet were inspected and trained, and many were visited for a second and third time. A noticeable increase in damage control awareness was evidenced by improved performance in damage control drills and an increase in the number of requisitions submitted to remedy equipment deficiencies.

—There were insufficiently trained supply personnel on board all 81 Fleet Command ships. This necessitated an increase in the on-board supply personnel allowance for each ship and the establishment of a joint training and reinspection team. By year end all but nine of 81 ships had reached the revised personnel allowance. Reinspection of shipboard supply departments resulted in four percent rated excellent, 25 percent good, 39 percent satisfactory, and 32 percent unsatisfactory. By comparison, earlier inspections had resulted in unanimously unsatisfactory ratings.

—Inadequate repair part support aboard Fleet Command ships necessitated a supply overhaul assistance program. All blue water ships transferred to the VNN were given an equipment validation, new consolidated allowance list, and updated package of repair parts.

—Finally, the lack of efficient shipboard supply management, marked by the improper use of funds and the absence of reporting procedures, led to the establishment of an intensive management training program, a screening process for all documents, and the use of routine reports and graphs to monitor logistics efforts. Requisition input rose from 20 to 173 per day, and in spite of this eight-fold increase in requisition, total expenditures dropped by 35 percent.¹⁶¹

RIVERINE WARFARE

(C) The US Navy began to transfer brown water assets to the VNN in July 1968. By July 1970 a total of 650 river combatant vessels of a dozen basic configurations were under the operational control of the VNN and manned by VNN crews. The turnover was accomplished by progressively phasing VNN crewmembers into individual USN crews until the last USN crewmember was relieved and the craft was turned over. In addition to craft, all riverine logistics bases and command and control facilities were transferred to VNN control.

(C) Riverine operations were organized into a series of campaigns designated by the term TRAN HUNG DAO (THD) followed by a sequential number, each of which related to a specific geographic area. Overall riverine operations were commanded by the Deputy Commander, TRAN HUNG DAO Campaigns (Riverine).

(C) Past experience, reinforced by the events of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive, substantiated the essential interdependency of Army and Navy units operating in the riverine environment. In large portions of Military Regions 3 and 4 the inland waterways provided the only reliable routes for transporting men and materiel required to maintain military superiority. Control of these lines of communication was essential to the support of Government

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Vessels of the Vietnamese brown water navy.

of Vietnam bases and to the successful expansion of the area over which the South Vietnamese exercised effective control.

(C) River craft were extremely vulnerable to ambush along the rivers and canals, most of which were relatively narrow with heavily overgrown banks. Many waterways, especially in the dry season, have very high banks that significantly reduced craft self-defense capabilities and permitted the enemy to engage in boat hunting with impunity.

(S) Since the VNN depended on ground troops to provide bank security in support of waterway interdiction and waterborne guard post operations, there was potential for mutual support between VNN and ARVN/RF/PF forces throughout the riverine areas of operation. The VNN forces assigned in these areas were capable of contributing significant mobility and firepower to joint operations, particularly when the special capabilities of these riverine craft were exploited in basic operational planning. On a countrywide basis, this potential was seldom fully employed.

(C) Under the provisions of an RVNAF 1971 proclamation and the Combined Campaign Plan, the VNN was responsible for control and security of

waterways not assigned to the national police or customs agencies. The sole exception to this proclamation was on the Mekong River from Gai Be to Dong Tam where the VNN was allowed to stop and search boats to prevent the movement of men and material from Dinh Tuong Province (Base Area 470) to Kien Hoa Province. Otherwise, the VNN was prohibited from interfering with craft on pacified waterways for the purpose of search or seizure unless: (1) they received fire from the craft, (2) they had previous intelligence about a specific craft or area, or (3) there was a maritime policeman in the VNN craft.

(C) Year end planning envisioned the progressive attrition of the VNN's brown water assets and the phased assumption of security responsibilities on all inland waterways by the National Maritime Police. As the maritime police were organized, however, the term "national" is something of a misnomer. In point of fact, the essentially autonomous control exercised by individual province chiefs over assigned police forces and the lack of jurisdiction of each force outside its own province argued against the effective prosecution of any national task by this organization.¹⁰²

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NHIA (LDNN) FORCES**

(C) The Vietnamese Navy included an elite organization known as LDNN that exercised technical and operational skills in three broad areas: SEAL operations, salvage operations, and EOD operations.¹⁰⁸

SEAL Forces

(C) The LDNN SEAL mission was to conduct unconventional warfare, counter-guerilla operations, and clandestine operations in maritime areas and riverine environments. SEAL teams were employed in operations to undermine the morale, and the military, economic, psychological, and political strengths of the enemy. From 1968 until 1971 LDNN personnel trained with operating USN SEAL teams. As the number of trained VNN personnel increased, LDNN organized the SEAL division and established training centers at Cat Lai and Cam Ranh Bay. The training curriculum was patterned after USN UDT/SEAL training program.

(C) The LDNN SEALs were organized in platoons composed of two officers and 12 enlisted men. Each platoon included specialists in intelligence collection, communications, medical aid, demolition, and boat engineering. Operational strength of the division was 22 officers and 80 enlisted men.

(C) Prior to the spring offensive, SEAL operating platoons were deployed to Hao An in Military Region 1 and at Cat Lai, Tuyen Nhon and Phuoc Xuyen in Military Regions 3 and 4. They were tasked with gathering intelligence, conducting riverine interdiction operations, ambushes, defensive patrols, emplacement of sensors, and reacting to sensor activations. Shortly after the beginning of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive the I Corps Commander requested that SEALs be deployed in Military Region 1, where they were assigned to four points along the coastline. In Military Regions 3 and 4 SEALs were retained only at Cat Lai and Nam Can.

(C) One of the missions assigned to the SEALs was hydrographic reconnaissance and beach survey preparatory to emplacement of the causeway at Wunder Beach which was used to support the counteroffensive. SEALs also conducted hydrographic reconnaissance of beaches north of the Cua Viet to select a site for a possible amphibious landing.

(C) The platoon at Thuan An was primarily used to conduct insertions north and south of the Cua Viet river to gather intelligence on enemy movement, resupply, and troop concentrations. The remaining platoons conducted riverine and coastal interdiction operations and collected intelligence.¹⁰⁹

Salvage

(C) The VNN salvage company was essentially

self-sufficient in the type of work for which it was trained: salvage operations of 100 tons or less in 90 feet of water. US Navy efforts were limited to advising the salvage company at Cat Lai when requested by VNN personnel. No US Navy advisors participated in field salvage operations. Advisors concentrated on completing construction of the VNN diving school, a self-help program.

(C) Of the 95 craft sunk since 30 March, 59 (62 percent) were salvaged, a commendable record. Of the remaining craft, 18 were unsalvageable and 18 (19 percent) were pending determination at year end. The number of craft salvaged was reduced by futile attempts to salvage the LSIL HQ 327, an effort which diverted a sizeable portion of both equipment and personnel beginning in July. This problem was eliminated by the December decision to abandon salvage of this craft. Lack of security in the U Minh Forest also reduced the percent of craft salvaged. Eleven craft were sunk there and the VNN did not intend to send elements of the salvage company to that area until the military situation improved.¹⁰⁰

EOD Operations

(C) VNN EOD teams were an integral part of harbor defense operations. They were responsible for the deactivation or disposal of explosives found on ships and in the water. There were 12 EOD teams with an allowance of one officer and four enlisted men on each team. These teams were located throughout the country. Basic EOD training was received at the joint RVNAF EOD school at Go Vap. Underwater training was accomplished at the LDNN UDT/SEAL school at Cam Ranh Bay.

HARBOR DEFENSE

(C) Harbor defense in the major ports of the Republic of Vietnam was the responsibility of VNN Harbor Defense Units (HDU). Each HDU was under the operational control of a naval base commander and dependent upon the naval base for support. The harbor defense forces safeguarded a water area to protect shipping against:

- Attack by surface or submarine craft.
- Enemy mining operations.
- Attack by swimmers.

The primary emphasis was placed on detecting and deterring the swimmer sapper.

(C) The harbor defense mission was accomplished by conducting continuous harbor patrol and surveillance operations. There were 91 craft assigned to the various HDUs. The LDNN EOD teams in the ports played a key role in the protection of shipping by conducting nightly ship and pier checks to detect and dispose of swimmer sapper emplaced mines. As a result of the VNN having assumed USN har-

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bor defense and EOD responsibilities with limited personnel and material support, a steady deterioration of performance was noted in 1971, culminating in several successful enemy minings of ships in Military Region 2 harbors.

(C) During 1972 there were intensive efforts to redistribute personnel, increase boat crew allowances, and improve EOD performance. Installation of preventive maintenance schedules, upgrading the priority of repair and overhaul, and increased emphasis on routine care and maintenance improved the operational readiness of harbor defense craft. VNN officer training programs were revised to include harbor defense training.

(C) During the enemy offensive every HDU and EOD team demonstrated its capability to increase its tempo of operations to meet an increased threat. Craft availability and employment increased by an average of 15 percent. The number of detainees apprehended quarterly increased 20 percent, an indication that patrols were being conducted more aggressively and effectively.

(C) No US or US interest ships were sunk during the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. Three were lightly damaged by swimmer sapper attack, but there was no effect on operations. Sixteen swimmer sapper attacks were thwarted by alert harbor defense forces. Thirteen swimmer sappers were killed. Ten ship minings were prevented by LDNN EOD personnel who discovered mines attached to the underwater hull and disarmed them prior to detonation.

(C) The Long Tau channel was transited daily by 18 to 20 ships and was the only channel by which deep draft ships transited to and from the Saigon port complex. As such it warranted a high-priority security effort to prevent successful attack on special interest ships and sinkings which could block the channel. The Long Tau was within the Rung Sat Special Zone and it was the Rung Sat commander's responsibility to protect shipping on the channel. Security from Nha Be to the Saigon area port facilities was provided by naval units of the Capital Military District.¹⁰⁰



Newly graduated SEALs pass in review at the Nha Trang Naval Training Center.

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LOGISTICS

(C) Until the program for accelerated turnover of logistics (ACTOVLOG) to the Vietnamese began in 1968, the VNN supply effort was limited to support of shipyard repairs. Under ACTOVLOG, field supply was transferred to the VNN but was actually run by US advisors drawing material from the USN supply depot at Newport. The VNN supply system was disorganized and ineffective. During July to September 1971 the USN undertook the job of restructuring the entire VNN supply system. By December 1972 the VNN had assumed full logistic support responsibility.

(C) By late 1972 the expected withdrawal of military advisors caused certain programs to take on a new urgency. Establishing an accurate baseline record of on-board equipment and comparing it to authorizations was one such project. The VNN used RVNAF tables of organization and equipment (TO&E) to reflect requirements for personnel and equipment. In July 1972 it was found that the majority of the approximately 100 VNN TO&Es did not accurately reflect the VNN's personnel and equipment requirements. This was a result of a combination of rapid change in the VNN authorized personnel strength and the accelerated turnover of ships, craft, and bases to VNN. Because the TO&Es were invalid, it was impossible to generate an accurate program upon which to base the level of support that would be provided to the VNN. The need for a definitive VNN equipment baseline and current, valid TO&Es was evident. In August 1972, NAG and VNN embarked on a comprehensive review of all VNN TO&Es and a countrywide inventory of major items (i.e., \$1,000 and over and/or mission essential items). By December this task had been completed and the VNN MASF program was being updated to reflect revised authorizations and inventory quantities.¹⁴⁷

(C) The Vietnamese Navy Supply Center (VNNSC) was the heart of the supply system. All customer requisitions (less those from certain intermediate support bases in the field) were submitted directly to the VNNSC on MILSTRIP requisitions. All CONUS material for the VNN was received at the VNNSC from the Naval Supply Center, Oakland, turned over to the VNN, and placed in stock or distributed from the VNNSC to customers. Advisors at the VNNSC exercised control over funds for VNN secondary item requirements. The center was therefore a central support point and central control point.

(C) The supply system was designed to be as simple as possible. It was FAM card oriented, but burden of all document preparation and updating records was performed by a computer. Time

tested and proven USN forms, formats, procedures, programs, and systems were used. The system was fully compatible with the US supply system, as well as with customer activities in-country. No part of the system was unnecessarily complicated and no part was beyond the ability of the VNN to comprehend, manage, or maintain, including data processing management and programs.

(C) The system was designed for ultimate VNN operation without USN advisor or contractor assistance. In terms of improved support the system proved its value. Effectiveness reached the desired goals under VNN staffing and management, with USN personnel operating in strictly an advisory role since October of 1972. Advisors concentrated on document and material control and on processing and accuracy. These were measured by quality assurance techniques. Standards were being met. Data was reviewed in detail at weekly joint VNN/USN management meetings to determine necessary corrective action in terms of training, revised procedures, or larger samples for records correction purposes.

(C) All blue water ships transferred to the VNN were given an equipment validation, a new consolidated allowance list, and an updated package of repair parts. Seventy ships were involved between October 1971 and December 1972. Line item deficiencies totaling 145,000 were found, and materiel ordered was stored on board after supply departments were organized and storekeepers trained in supply procedures.

(C) The supply operation at the eighteen logistic bases was also crucial to VNN readiness. Field supply effectiveness improved markedly and paralleled VNNSC effectiveness.

Inspections

(C) Concurrent with the design, documentation, and implementation of a standard field supply system, joint USN/VNN field supply assistance teams were organized to perform detailed inspections of each supply department, as well as to retrain and coordinate required improvement actions. These teams concentrated on adherence to procedures, records, and materiel location accuracy, management of materiel on order, and overall support. The inspections were very thorough and an improvement in grades in the last quarter of 1972, compared with the same period in 1971, illustrated the increased ability of the VNN to operate the system. The VNN achieved records and materiel location accuracy ranging from 90 to 96 percent without advisor presence.

(C) Substantial amounts of stock were shipped back to CONUS during 1972. However, with the availability of twelve months usage data recorded under the mechanized inventory control system, a

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reasonable base was available on which to identify excesses. At year end the VNN had less than \$100,000 of excess material remaining. Excesses were also determined at major field supply activities.¹⁶⁴

Supply Funding

(C) Availability of MASF funds in supply was not a limiting factor. However, there was a need to be able to define projected requirements with more precision than in the past. Accordingly, advisors programmed a stratification report to identify projected requirements on the basis of past usage, material on hand, on order or backorder, and material in supply which could be made available to satisfy future requirements.

(C) The VNN piaster budget was underfunded for consumable material. Although the Vietnamese Navy had increased in size by a factor of four since 1968, the purchasing power of the piaster budget remained virtually unchanged. The VNN requested funding increases each year for consumable material. These requests were reviewed by the VNN CNO, JGS, and the Ministry of National Defense. Each review resulted in reductions to the original request. To avoid impairing the maintenance, repair, and operational capability of the VNN, advisors funded critical material support deficiencies with MASF funds.

Supply Problems

(C) Problems affecting a self-sufficient supply system were few in number, but serious.

—The VNN did not have adequate depth of logistics experience among officers and enlisted men to ensure the continued success of the supply system.

—The VNN staff members knew how to operate the system, but they could not plan or accommodate change, and there were no trained personnel available for rotation.

—The VNNSC was located within the shipyard complex in Saigon, and storage facilities were inadequate. Both the shipyard and the supply center required expansion of facilities to complete Vietnamization, and the shipyard expansion required existing structures occupied by the supply center.

(C) To offset the above deficiencies, advisors:

—Rewrote the entire enlisted storekeeper training curriculum and established a new storekeeper class A school at Cat Lai.

—Encouraged the establishment of a supply officer school to start in February or March of 1973.

—Increased off-shore instruction at US supply facilities.

—Recommended to the VNN CNO establishment of a supply corps to provide a professional cadre

of supply managers adequate to the needs of the VNN.

—Arranged for allocation of land contiguous to the VNN Newport facilities for construction of additional warehouses and consolidation of supply operations.¹⁶⁵

VNN SHIPYARD

(C) The goal of the US advisory unit at the VNN shipyard was to assist the shipyard in attaining self-sufficiency by the end of 1973. Self-sufficiency was defined as the ability to overhaul and maintain all VNN blue water ships, including their major equipment, with all work being accomplished at the VNN shipyard, requiring no work to be assigned to commercial contracting agencies or out-of-country facilities.

(C) In late 1968 the VNN shipyard was inadequately manned, lacked adequate skills, and did not possess the industrial equipment and facilities required to meet its workload demands. Since December 1968 the VNN shipyard advisory unit had been engaged in the intensive, accelerated effort to aid the shipyard in meeting blue water fleet maintenance and overhaul requirements. In early 1970 the advisory unit commenced a major facilities modernization program consisting of 39 separate MILCON projects at a cost of almost US\$ 8 million. During the same year the advisory force at the shipyard was increased from 18 to 83 personnel. These personnel concentrated on organizing and directing the activities of the production shops. By late 1971 facilities modernization was nearing completion, and VNN personnel began to assume control of the production shops. The advisory force was decreased to 43 personnel, and the advisory effort began to shift toward improvement of management systems while increasing skilled manning levels. Major programs were initiated to clean up the shipyard, refine its management and production techniques, and increase its skilled work force through accelerated recruitment and training programs.

(C) By April 1972 the facilities modernization program was completed, an aggressive cleanup program was in progress, and an extensive training program was underway. Military advisors continued to be phased out as US civilian shipyard specialists were brought in to effect specific training, management, and production improvements. In February 1973 the shipyard possessed the number of Vietnamese employees required to meet its workload demands, but these personnel required additional technical skills training to become fully effective. Training programs were capable of meeting this need.

(C) While production facilities were adequate,

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additional industrial pier space was required. Pier space was to be expanded from 1,510 to 1,930 linear feet by connecting the two major existing piers. Engineering studies for this expansion were completed. It was anticipated that construction would be completed in roughly 18 months.

(C) From 1968 until early 1972 limited numbers of civilian personnel were temporarily assigned to the VNN shipyard advisory unit to provide specific shipyard technical skills and guidance which could not be readily provided by US Navy personnel. Civilianization of advisory billets at the VNN shipyard commenced in March 1972 with civilian personnel filling 25 authorized billets at the VNN shipyard as of February 1973. The personnel structure was organized so that actual production assistance was provided solely by US civilian consultants. During the 60-day withdrawal period following the January cease-fire agreement, US military advisory personnel concentrated their efforts toward the upgrading of management functions and the turnover of all administrative functions and reporting requirements to the various consultants. The US civilian consultant team was comprised of US civil service personnel with a wide range of experience in US shipyard trades. These consultants were placed in key positions throughout the shipyard organization to monitor shipyard progress and to ensure that established programs continued to grow.

(C) In late February 1973 a revised shipyard self-sufficiency master plan (SSMP) was completed. The SSMP highlighted those areas of the shipyard operation that required continued support and assistance to ensure achievement of self-sufficiency by the shipyard before the phaseout of US consultants. The SSMP established dates for the accomplishment of established objectives and milestones concurrent with the planned phase-out of the US consultants. This plan enhanced the future monitoring of actual progress versus planned progress toward the various pre-established goals and highlighted areas that might require attention. The plan had the concurrence of the Director, Vietnamese Naval Shipyard.

(C) The chronic shortages of mechanically skilled personnel in the Saigon labor market, coupled with the inability of the VNN shipyard to offer competitive wages, in past years prevented the shipyard from increasing its industrial capacity and capabilities at a rate consistent with increasing technological requirements. The problems encountered in the repair of various shipboard equipment and the addition of increasingly sophisticated ship systems in the WHEC's (cutters) and DERs (destroyer escorts) emphasized the critical need to acquire greater numbers of technically skilled personnel.

(C) To eliminate these skill shortfalls, development of a specific skills training program commenced in December 1971. The training program started at the Vietnamese naval shipyard in early April 1972. The program employed a training staff comprised of civilian consultants with extensive shipyard experience, Vietnamese bilingual translator/instructors with technological backgrounds, and bilingual VNNSY shop personnel. The program utilized VNNSY shop facilities and naval training center basic technical schools at Nha Trang to support the training effort. The program consisted of two broad groups of trainees:

—Seventeen-year-old hires received basic instruction in eight primary shipyard skills. Some 700 trainees were, as of February 1973, on board, and the program was approximately 65 percent complete. The success of this training was measured by the fact that after four months trainees were more skilled than graduates of the former Vietnamese three-year apprentice program.

—Established ship personnel and apprentice school graduates who received more advanced instruction in fourteen specialized skills. About 300 Vietnamese were in this program.

(C) For middle-management and first-line supervisory personnel courses were also being conducted in shop management, instruction techniques, and work scheduling. Vietnamese shipyard instructors would be conducting virtually all classroom training by April 1973.

(C) From 1968 until late 1971 financial management of VNN shipyard funding was handled directly by US advisory personnel. Development of cost accumulation programs began in December 1971, and would ultimately provide the Vietnamese with the management data base required for effective financial planning and control. Two major cost accumulation programs were in effect since February 1972 and provided detailed feedback information on:

—Material cost accumulation for repairs and maintenance by ship and work item.

—Production workload distribution and production shop manning. Reports generated by these systems made it possible to identify the material and manpower costs expended for each job order.

(C) US financial control was exercised over VNN shipyard MASF expenditures through a quarterly operating target (OPTAR) authorization, which limited obligation authority for ordering materials based on forecasted repair and maintenance requirements. US consultants assigned to the planning and supply departments reviewed all material requirements for validity and applicability to approved work requests to ensure that the shipyard operated within ceiling constraints.

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(C) In October 1972 administrative control of MASF funds directly chargeable to blue water fleet repair and maintenance was shifted from the VNN shipyard to VNN Fleet Command. In effect, this shift of administrative control placed fundamental financial management responsibilities on the customer, providing the catalyst required to improve liaison between the shipyard and Fleet Command in managing MASF funds. Prior to the shift the VNN shipyard was accountable to no one other than US advisory personnel for the expenditure of MASF funds for blue water fleet repair and maintenance.

(C) As VNN shipyard personnel continued to gain financial management experience through implemented cost accumulation programs, and as liaison between the shipyard and fleet command continued to improve, effective financial management was to be achieved by the end of 1973.

(C) The ferrocement program was initiated in 1970 in order to provide coastal patrol craft of the VNN. Ferrocement craft—low cost, simple to construct, and easy to maintain—were well-suited to the Vietnam environment and were within Vietnamese construction capabilities at the naval shipyard. An initial order of outfitting materials provided USN support for 160 coastal raider craft. An evaluation of operational requirements by the VNN determined a need for a total of approximately 150 coastal raiders for which USN support was programmed.

(C) In the early stages of the program US advisors participated actively in the management of the project, but by January 1972 the Vietnamese demonstrated self-sufficiency in this project and active advisor participation was terminated.

(C) By June 1972 over forty of these craft were on patrol. By the end of 1973 the coastal raider was to be the primary patrol vessel of the coastal force. Fifty-eight of 150 craft scheduled for construction were delivered as of February 1973. In late 1968, the shipyard was capable of only rudimentary repair work on major ships, and its productive effort was concentrated on the overhaul of small craft. By late 1971 the VNN shipyard had capably overhauled some 30 major blue water ships. A rapidly growing, skilled work force and greatly improved facilities enabled the VNN shipyard to successfully accomplish major overhauls on every blue water ship type with the exception of the WHEC DER class. The shipyard had limited major repair capabilities of this WHEC DER class but had the capacity for some major work such as 5" 38 regunning and main engine replacement. US consultants were concentrating on developing Vietnamese technical know-how for WHEC DER peculiar equipment, and by mid-1973, the VNN shipyard was to

have the manpower and technical knowledge to match its facilities, enabling all out-of-country overhauls to be terminated in June 1973, 6 months ahead of schedule.

(C) The early termination of the out-of-country program was due to a re-evaluation of the shipyard's capability by the shipyard director, with the subsequent assignment of the last two out-of-country overhauls, a DER and a WHEC, to the shipyard. This was a major step by the VNN toward full self-sufficiency.

(C) More than 50 overhauls were scheduled at VNNSY during calendar year 1973. This number represented the average overhaul level that needed to be maintained by the shipyard to be considered self-sufficient. As stated previously, the goal of the US advisory unit at the VNN shipyard was to assist the shipyard in attaining self-sufficiency by the end of 1973.

(C) Since the VNN repair complex consisted not only of the VNN shipyard but also of seven logistic support bases (LSBs) and ten intermediate support bases (ISBs) as well, the overall capability at these bases was an important measure of Vietnamization. The VNN shipyard was a VNN activity, while the ISBs and LSBs began as US operated facilities. Beginning in 1966, VNN personnel were integrated into these activities and given on the job training. Formal base turnover to the VNN started with the turnover of LSB Cat Lo in April 1971 and was completed with the turnover of LSB Da Nang in April 1972.

(C) The first craft and junk overhaul program was implemented by the VNN for 1972. Approximately 81 percent of the scheduled overhauls were completed. The difference between the scheduled and actual completion was attributable to a combination of factors existing at ISBs and LSBs:

—Repair department manning was only 65 percent of TO&E allowances: (The overhaul schedule was developed assuming 90 percent manning.)

—Lack of skilled personnel, aggravated by a high rate of turnover of military personnel at the base, required a continuous training effort.

—Ineffective middle management, including ineffective use of available personnel.

US assistance efforts were being concentrated in these areas, and the ongoing improvement plans highlighted simple management techniques. Many projects were undertaken to improve VNN, ISB, and LSB utilization and management, including establishment of standardized work packages and procedures, development of an alteration control program for the VNN, workload and asset utilization studies to assist the VNN to determine the best ways to utilize their available assets, and finally, studies and training programs to identify and provide training in specific repair techniques, with the goal of reduc-

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repair workload by improving the quality of the work accomplished.

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE SYSTEM¹⁷⁰

(C) A preventive maintenance systems (PMS) project office was established by COMNAVFORV in July 1971 to direct the translation, production, and distribution of PMS material to the VNN. This office developed major programs for installation of PMS in the brown and blue water navies and coordinated secondary programs to support PMS for the coastal radar system, communication system, and training programs at the naval training centers. Commencing with the initial installations in November 1971, a total of 98 percent of the more than 1,600 VNN ships and craft were fitted with PMS. To achieve 100 percent installation, 29 craft remained to be included in the system.

(C) An overall assessment of "Fair" was assigned to the state of PMS in the VNN. This evaluation is based on a study of the inspection reports submitted by USN/VNN PMS advisors. The trend of PMS performance followed a sawtooth, yet upward, path. The same trend was noted in the blue water navy, as well as shore installations, a phenomenon that was directly attributable to inspection and monitoring team visits. The appearance of these teams usually increased lagging interest in PMS and was designed to counter the largest remaining problem with the program—that of getting VNN personnel to believe in and follow the principles of PMS.

(C) Programs planned for 1973 included assisting VNN with the installation of PMS aboard their aircraft, continuation of PMS development for industrial plant equipment, and developing VNN capability for PMS documentation, production, and distribution. Self-sufficiency for the VNN PMS program was anticipated by December 1973.

MEDICAL FACILITIES

(C) Medical and dental programs were completely stabilized by the end of 1972. All VNN dispensaries and hospitals were under the administrative and technical control of the VNN Surgeon General. Since the beginning of the medical turnover program in November 1969, the following facilities have been transferred to the VNN Surgeon General:

- VNN Hospital, Bach Dang, rated at 100 beds.
 - Two floating dispensaries, LSMH-400 and LSMH-401 (outpatient care).
 - VNN shipyard dispensary, rated at 20 beds.
 - Dispensaries rated at 20 beds located at ten points throughout the country.
- The VNN hospital had an average inpatient census of 125 to 175. Improvements completed since November 1969

included a new three-story surgical and dependent care unit, an obstetrical and nursing service, and an intensive care unit.

TRAINING

(C) Training was another vital element of VNN readiness. The VNN Underway Training Group (UTG), located at Cam Ranh Bay, was established in January 1972. The UTG mission was to provide refresher training for VNN fleet ships upon completion of overhaul and at interim periods as directed by the fleet commander. The first ship completed refresher training in April 1972. Subsequently, four WHECs, two PCEs, one LSSL, and one PGM completed refresher training. Ships previously turned over to the VNN received training at USN fleet training groups, but by late 1972 training of VNN fleet ships was conducted by the VNN Underway Training Group.

(C) VNN training centers (NTC) were located at Nha Trang, Cam Ranh Bay, Saigon, and Cat Lai. NTC Nha Trang, was an approximate output capability of 2,600 students annually, provided elementary and intermediate level functional training for electricians, enginemen, radarmen, radiomen, and electronic technicians and was the home of the Vietnamese Naval Academy. NTC Cam Ranh Bay had an approximate output capability of 3,600 students annually and provided elementary and intermediate level functional training for yeomen, gunner's mates, quartermasters, boatswain mates, and damage controlmen. Recruit training was also conducted at Cam Ranh Bay. Officer training and advanced level functional training was administered at NTC Saigon, which could train approximately 700 students annually. NTC Cat Lai provided elementary and intermediate level supply training, with a maximum student load of approximately 900 students annually.

(C) Where in 1969 to 1971 it was necessary to train a large number of people quickly, recruiting requirements were stabilized in 1972 and emphasis shifted to high quality training. The introduction of more sophisticated shipboard sensors and weapons systems dictated a need for increased technical training which was largely met in 1972. During 1972 several critical intermediate level enlisted courses were upgraded and advanced level courses developed so that previous trainees could be returned to training centers for more sophisticated training. Concurrent with the revision of curricula, dramatic improvement was made in training facilities, especially at Nha Trang where communications, electronics and radar labs were installed. In 1972 the problem of a lack of middle management skills was also addressed through the development of the VNN command and staff school and the inclusion

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of five weeks of military and leadership training with intermediate level functional skill training.

(C) Through FYs 70 and 71 the VNN was heavily involved in the training of new personnel to operate and maintain the assets turned over to them. During those two years many people were sent off-shore to attend short duration courses. Starting in FY 72, the training needs shifted from the elementary level to more advanced courses, to technical courses, and to managerial training. Figure C-17 depicts FY 73 off-shore training. Officer training accounted for over 60 percent of the program, with the emphasis on advanced education and on the job functional training, particularly resources management. Enlisted personnel continued to be sent off-shore for highly technical training not available in-country. The number of students trained off-shore in the future should continue to decline, particularly for enlisted training, as in-country training facilities expand to meet the technical training requirements.

SUMMARY

(TS) As of the end of March 1973 a coastal surveillance system was in being. At that time the operational readiness rate of VNN blue water ships and coastal patrol craft was 87 percent and 86 percent respectively. It was felt that the VNN could maintain this rate and could prevent overt major enemy resupply efforts from the sea. However, the level of infiltration and transshipment that reportedly had occurred undetected by the naval barrier forces represented a deficiency in VNN capability. The withdrawal of USN P-3 aircraft from the coastal surveillance system further degraded infiltration interdiction. The VNN was felt to have the capability to provide and deploy forces as necessary

to contain the infiltration and transshipment threat at levels experienced during the first quarter 1973.

(TS) The growing threat of the North Vietnamese Navy could be countered within the capabilities existing in March 1973, provided the VNN and VNAF coordinated tactics. However, the loss of some blue water ships was likely in this event.

(TS) Riverine forces were adequate in number, disposition, and readiness. The required strengths were predicted at 250 river patrol craft and 450 riverine assault craft with an operational readiness rate of at least 80 percent required. Deployment to high threat areas and organization to support and operationally complement deployed ground forces were also required.

(TS) In summary, the VNN was felt to be organized, trained, and effective in combat to fulfill its missions and counter the postulated threat. Attrition rates of equipment were expected to be sufficiently low so that the missions could be carried out. Adequate repair and salvage capability existed to maintain craft readiness at acceptable levels to maintain an adequate combat capability.¹⁷¹

US MARINE ADVISORY EFFORT

(U) The Marine Advisory Unit operated to provide advice and assistance to the Vietnamese Marine Corps. Much of the bloody combat of the struggle for Quang Tri Province, including the recapture of the Quang Tri Citadel and the defense of Hue, fell upon the Vietnamese marine units. Marine advisors at all levels provided important assistance. During the early days of the offensive, when things were not going well, the Marine advisors provided an example of steadfastness and professionalism which did much to calm the fears of the Vietnamese marines.

**NAVY AND MARINE CORPS OFFSHORE TRAINING PROGRAM
(FY 1973)**

SENIOR OFFICER	9 OFFICERS - \$ 37,000
PHD/MASTER DEGREE PROGRAMS	8 OFFICERS - \$117,000
BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMS	6 OFFICERS - \$ 74,000
FUNCTIONAL TRAINING & OJT	112 OFFICERS - \$207,000
ENLISTED PROGRAMS	51 ENLISTED - \$102,000
MEDICAL PROGRAM	6 OFFICERS/ \$ 43,000 13 ENLISTED
MARINE CORPS PROGRAMS	34 OFFICERS/ \$122,000 15 ENLISTED
MISCELLANEOUS SUPPORT EXPENSES	\$39,000
TOTAL	284 PERSONNEL - \$801,000

Source: NAVADVGRP

Figure: C-17

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(C) The Marine Advisory Unit functioned as a part of the Naval Advisory Group. Advisors were provided to the VNMC Division Staff, to the technical services, to training activities, and to field units at the brigade and battalion level. Figure C-18 illustrates command relations within the Marine Advisory Unit.¹⁷²

(U) The mission of the Marine Advisory Unit was to provide advice and assistance to the Vietnamese Marine Corps in all matters pertaining to command, administration, training, tactical operations, logistics, and combat readiness with the objective of establishing a Vietnamese Marine Corps capable of conducting amphibious, riverine, helicopterborne, and ground combat operations without US assistance.¹⁷³

(U) The Vietnamese Marine Corps contained over 14,000 officers and men organized into a Marine Corps Headquarters and one division consisting of three brigade headquarters, nine infantry battalions, three artillery battalions, five combat support battalions, a marine corps base camp, and a training center.¹⁷⁴

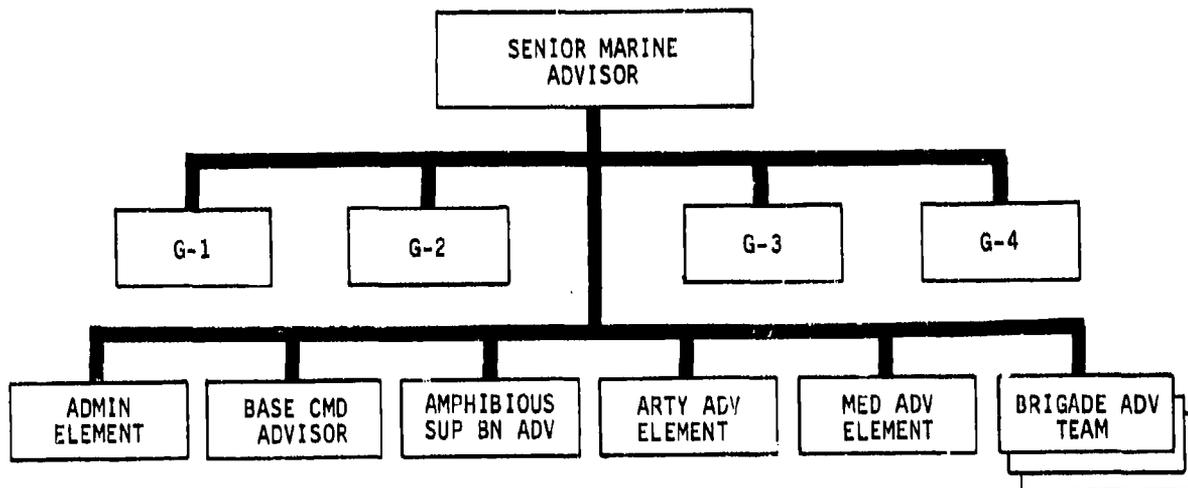
(C) From its inception the marine advisory concept has emphasized extremely close teamwork, coordination, and the sharing of common dangers. When VNMC units were deployed from Saigon to Quang Tri Province, their advisors accompanied

them along with other American advisory and support personnel in air liaison (USAF), communications (USA), intelligence (USMC), and naval gunfire liaison (ANGLICO). They were present with the VNMC throughout the worst of the fighting.¹⁷⁵

(C) The rapid buildup of forces in response to the enemy offensive also caused an acceleration of VNMC training requirements. This was especially true in recruit training. The Marine advisors with the recruit training unit provided both technical advice and equipment and were instrumental in helping the VNMC through a very difficult period.

(C) Special programs were established to assist the VNMC in proper utilization of available US support. For example, a four-day course was given to Vietnamese officers from the marine battalions in close air support and naval gunfire spotting techniques. These were followed by extended practical application periods under the supervision of battalion advisors. This program was so successful that training was conducted in January 1973 which extended NGFS procedures to all VNMC artillery forward observers. Special classes were also conducted during September 1972 to train the VNMC personnel in Loran Targeting (LTGAP) procedures for radar controlled air strikes during inclement weather. This added an extremely significant all

MARINE ADVISORY UNIT



Source: Marine Advisory Unit

Figure: C-18

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weather support capability to VNMC operations which seriously hampered the enemy ability to exploit periods of bad weather.¹⁷⁶

(C) Marine artillery advisors were also instrumental in improving VNMC ability to fire counter-battery. Emphasis was placed on crater analysis and prompt reporting techniques as well as the creation of effective fire plans and allocations of assets. The VNMC was trained in the use of the 80mm recoilless rifle which replaced the 57mm recoilless rifle.

(C) Under Project ENHANCE PLUS the VNMC received LCVP amphibious tractors. Marine personnel wrote training programs and conducted familiarization on this equipment, thus giving the VNMC the ability to launch and recover small amphibious forces.¹⁷⁷

(C) When the enemy struck with his massive offensive, much of the VNMC equipment was lost. Because of their first hand knowledge of the situation the Marine advisors were able to quickly esti-

mate resupply requirements and were thus able to set the supply system in motion before formal loss reports were compiled by the VNMC. The result was that within six days of the initial combat loss report, aircraft were landing at Da Nang AB with emergency shipments of replacement items. This enabled VNMC units which had lost their equipment to become rapidly combat ready and reenter the fight.¹⁷⁸

(C) In addition to their role in the defensive effort the marine advisors also provided technical expertise in amphibious and vertical envelopment operations. As an example, the amphibious operation executed against Wunder Beach on 24 May 1972 was planned and carried out within a 40-hour period. The advisors also played a key supporting role in the recapture of the Quang Tri Citadel.

(U) Marine advisors suffered 14 men wounded in action during 1972.¹⁷⁹ This was in addition to the US marine casualties earlier mentioned under the ANGLICO section of the NGFS operation (Annex B).

US AIR FORCE ADVISORY GROUP

INTRODUCTION

(U) The activities of the USAF Advisory Group during 1972 and first quarter of 1973 reflected two major goals. First and foremost of these was Vietnamization, the continuing effort to create within the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) the self-sufficiency required for sustained operations without the direct assistance of US military personnel. The second goal was a corollary to the first in that the continuing withdraw of US forces caused a turnover of increased responsibilities to VNAF for the air defense and air support role within the Republic. During the first quarter 1972 excellent progress was made toward both goals. However, the initiation by the enemy of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive in late March 1972 created a sudden demand for air assets which the VNAF was unable to deliver without temporarily increased assistance from the USAF. For example, Direct Air Support Centers, responsible for air control within each of the military regions of South Vietnam, had been taken over by Vietnamese operators with only a small US team of advisors. The vastly increased requirement for experienced controllers generated by the offensive necessitated that US personnel step in to fill the gap. As the ground situation stabilized, control functions were gradually reassumed by VNAF. As a part of Project ENHANCE, which accelerated logistic support of the RVNAF, VNAF was able to replace losses incurred during the enemy offensive and to increase their defensive capability. Project ENHANCE PLUS further ac-

celerated the logistics effort and increased VNAF capabilities, particularly in airlift and air defense. The acquisition of these new capabilities required new training programs, which in turn cut into the percentage of effort available for operational sorties. The VNAF's remarkable capacity to continue to perform their combat role during the NVA offensive and through the completion of Projects ENHANCE and ENHANCE PLUS spoke well for Vietnamization of the air effort.

MISSION

(U) The mission of the US Air Force Advisory Group was to:

—Advise and assist the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) to achieve a state of combat readiness through the application of logistics, engineering, maintenance, communications, planning, and operating procedures.

—Act in an advisory capacity to the COMUSMACV and the Commander, 7th AF on all matters pertaining to VNAF operations, requirements, support and force objectives.¹⁸⁰

ORGANIZATION

(U) The Air Force Advisory Group (AFGP) was assigned to Headquarters, MACV. AFGP received common items support from USARV/MACV SUPCOM and USAF peculiar item support from 7th AF. AFGP also received logistic support from the VNAF to the extent of its ability to provide such support.

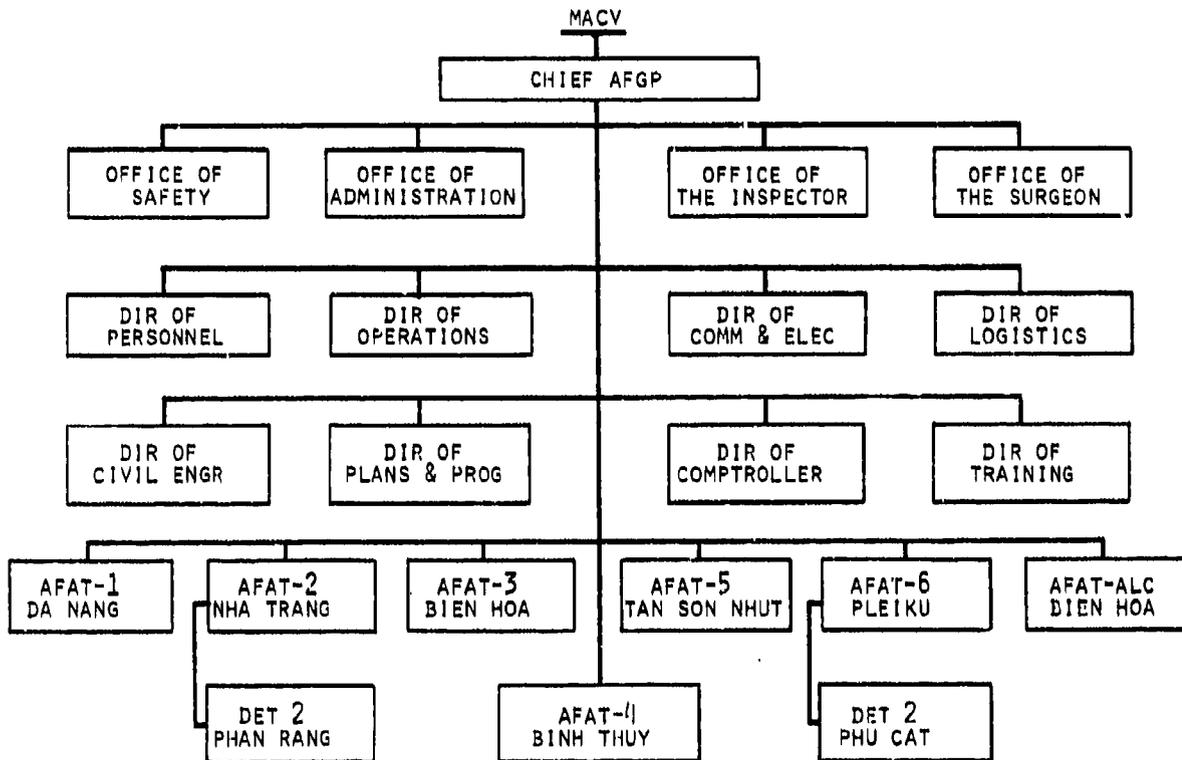
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AIR FORCE ADVISORY GROUP (AFGP) (1972)



Source: AFGP

Figure: C-19

(U) In addition to the normal staff organization the Chief, AFGP was represented in the field by a series of Air Force Advisory Teams (AFAT) located where required for their function. Figure C-19 illustrates the organization of the AFGP during 1972.

(U) On 15 October 1972 the 7th Air Force Liaison Officer (ALO) advisors in Military Regions 1, 2, and 3 became part of Air Force Advisory Teams (AFAT) 1, 2, and 3 respectively. In addition, an ALO advisor position was established in AFAT-4 (Military Region 4), where previously the position did not exist. ALO advisors in AFATs 1, 2, and 3 continued in their assigned duties as corps and division level advisors but worked directly for the AFAT chief. The Vietnamese general reserve force's ALO advisors remained under the command and control of AFGP's Director of Operations. The amalgamation of USAF advisors in the field was to insure effective advisory effort within each military region.¹⁸¹

RELATIONS WITH VNAF

(U) The Air Force Advisory Group training concept has been one of close cooperation with VNAF. At each level of command VNAF members worked with an opposite number (a person of the same specialty code) in the AFGP. This began at the highest echelon with the Chief of VNAF, LTG Tran Van Minh, working very closely in cooperation with his American counterpart, MG J. H. Watkins (after 16 May 1972, MG J. J. Jumper). This continued down through all key staff positions to the squadron level. HQ VNAF was thus supported by the HQ AFGP, and VNAF air divisions, wing, and squadrons similarly were assisted by members of the respective Air Force Advisory Teams (AFATs). For both officer and enlisted personnel of VNAF, direct training was given only as required; the focus was constantly on Vietnamization. Every effort was made to develop VNAF into a totally self-sufficient force prior to the US withdrawal. The ability of VNAF to make major alterations in

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its structure while at the same time carrying a full combat operations load spoke well of the proficiency and adaptability of the Vietnamese personnel as well as the success of their AFGP advisors.

OPERATIONS

Fighter Activity

(C) On 29 January 1972, VNAF A-37s of the 4th Air Division struck Viet Cong positions at night utilizing flares dropped from US Navy Sea Wolf helicopters. This was the first night operation of this type conducted by VNAF A-37s. Another milestone was achieved on 6 March 1972 when VNAF F-5s based at Da Nang AB were scrambled against an unidentified aircraft. This action marked the first all-VNAF active air defense response including detection, scramble, intercept, and identification.

(C) On 30 September 1971 all nine VNAF fighter squadrons were declared operationally ready. In April 1972 the unit equipment for the 516th and the 528th Tactical Fighter Squadrons was increased from 18 to 24 aircraft per squadron. Before the NGUYEN HUE Offensive, the fighter fragmentary order varied slightly from day to day, but normally averaged approximately 150 strike sorties per day. After the onset of the offensive the fighters managed to establish new records for day attack operations despite heavy combat losses that amounted to one-third of the operating A-1 fleet. On 20 April 1972, 221 sorties were flown, an outstanding accomplishment compared to the previous month's average of 124 sorties per day. After a steady buildup from an average of 857 strike sorties per week in March, the fighters established an all time high of 1,382 strike sorties during the week of 18 to 22 May 1972. As a result of the increasing daily sortie rate, a new monthly record of 5,433 sorties was established during May 1972. This effort resulted in a quarterly record for the months of April, May, and June 1972 of 14,768 strike sorties. During this period the daily frag rate was steadily increased to 176 fragged sorties per day. The higher numbers of sorties on some days was attributable to "add on" missions. While maintaining a 30 percent surge factor, the VNAF successfully deployed fighters to various areas of the country. These deployments were made from one military region to another with very few difficulties. This indicated that the VNAF was a much more cohesive and centralized force than it had been in the past.

(C) On 4 January 1972 procedure briefings were conducted by members of the 360th Tactical Fighter Wing and "Panama," the local ground-controlled intercept control. Two F-5s were placed on five-minute alert status on the morning of 5 January 1972. A scramble order was given; it took but four and one-half minutes for the first scramble to be-

come airborne. The VNAF F-5s completed the air defense training on 31 March 1972 and later assumed the air defense responsibility for the Republic of Vietnam during daylight hours. Since the F-5 aircraft was not an all-weather interceptor, the USAF continued to have the night and all-weather air defense responsibility for the Republic of Vietnam.

Fighters Received Under Project ENHANCE PLUS

(S) Between 1 and 18 November 1972, 118 F-5s were delivered to the Republic of Vietnam under Project ENHANCE PLUS. (Note: ENHANCE PLUS is discussed more fully in Annex E-Logistics.) By 25 November 1972 the VNAF, assisted by AFGP Directorate of Operations (AFGP/DO), gained approval of a plan to activate an additional five F-5 squadrons for a total of six squadrons. This plan called for a temporary reduction of F-5 combat sorties as A-37 pilots were transitioned to the F-5. It established a crew manning ratio of 1.25 with 24 aircraft per new squadron. The flying hour utilization rate was established at 25 hours per aircraft per month. By 31 December 1972 the first six A-37 pilots had completed upgrade training into the F-5. Fourteen additional pilots were in the upgrade program.

(S) Between 1 and 15 November 1972, 90 A-37 aircraft were delivered to the Republic of Vietnam under Project ENHANCE PLUS. By 25 November 1972 the VNAF, assisted by AFGP/DO, had developed a plan to activate three additional A-37 squadrons in May 1973 for a total of 10. This plan was approved for all but the last squadron and called for a temporary reduction of A-37 sorties as O-1 and transport pilots were transitioned to the A-37. It established a crew ratio of 1.25 with 24 aircraft per squadron. The flying hour program was established at 25 hours per aircraft per month and was to increase to 40 hours in FY 75. The first class of 10 O-1 pilots began ground training at Binh Thuy AB on 18 December 1972. A class of six transport pilots was scheduled to begin ground school at Nha Trang on 26 December 1972; however, four of the pilots did not report to Nha Trang as scheduled. Therefore only two transport pilots began ground school on 29 December 1972, three days later than originally scheduled.

VNAF Support of Cambodian Convoys¹⁸²

(S) As the USAF and US Army air coverage of Cambodian resupply convoys was phased down, the VNAF assumed the responsibility for tactical air support under coordinated agreements with the Khmer Republic. The VNAF was requested to provide continuous daylight airborne coverage of convoys with helicopter light fire teams. This was not

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Project ENHANCE PLUS increased the number of F-5 squadrons from one to a total of six.

feasible because of limited VNAF assets and the high level of conflict within Vietnam. However, VNAF placed eight A-37 fighters on ground alert in Military Region 4 for convoy escort response. Those aircraft were reserved on ground alert for an average of about three hours if not required for convey protection. In addition, the VNAF provided three U-17 forward air control aircraft for daylight mission support, two AC-119G gunships for night convoy cover, and one helicopter light fire team (two gunships and one command and control ship) on ground alert in the Khmer Republic halfway between the Vietnamese border and Phnom Penh.¹⁸⁹

Military Airlift

(C) The VNAF airlift fleet made tremendous progress. Prior to the NGUYEN HUE Offensive the VNAF transports were airlifting over 80 percent of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces

requirements. A C-7 squadron was activated on 1 March 1972 and became operationally ready only 31 days later.

(C) A significant milestone was established by the VNAF airlift force on 4 and 5 March 1972. As a test of one part of a RVNAF contingency movement plan, the VNAF 5th Air Division airlifted an ARVN airborne brigade from Tan Son Nhut to Pleiku. Using 23 C-123 aircraft on the first day and 15 on the second day, a total of 150 sorties airlifted 1,961 troops, 19 jeeps, 12 trucks, 15 trailers, 19 105mm guns, and 105,000 pounds of rations and ammunition. Control and marshalling during the offload operation at Pleiku was provided by the deployment of a 5th Air Division combat control element from Tan Son Nhut. With planned close-out times of 1900 and 1700 hours on the respective days, efficient turnaround and ground procedures allowed each day's operation to be concluded at

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Pleiku by approximately 1400 hours. The efficiency and precision with which this VNAF operation was planned and executed was a tribute to the professional competence of airlift managers, aircrews, and maintenance personnel.

(C) The VNAF activated its first C-7A Caribou unit, the 427th Transport Squadron, at Phu Cat AB on 1 March 1972. In the period of 1 to 31 March 1972 the 427th squadron achieved several enviable accomplishments. The day after activation the squadron commenced flying two daily line logistic missions, and on 5 March 1972 the missions were increased to five daily logistic lines. Seven were flown on 15 March 1972, and the flight level remained at that number for the remainder of the month. Training missions flown were in addition to the logistics mission. The squadron was declared operationally ready on 31 March 1972.

(C) On 1 July 1972 another C-7 squadron, the 431st Transport Squadron, was activated at Phu Cat AB. On 23 August 1972, the 310th Combat Crew Training Squadron completed the last VNAF crew-member training class and began turning over the remaining C-7 aircraft to the VNAF. On 15 August 1972 the USAF C-123 squadron at Tan Son Nhut ceased operations, and the VNAF received additional aircraft to replace the aircraft lost between 1 April and 30 June 1972. By the end of September 1972 all VNAF transport squadrons were equipped with 100 percent of their unit equipment aircraft.¹⁴⁴

(U) On 1 November 1972 VNAF C-7s, on temporary duty from Phu Cat AB, began scheduled airlift service from Binh Thuy AB in Military Region 4. Four to six missions daily were flown in support of the US Delta Regional Assistance Command from Monday through Saturday. The C-7s served many small airfields in the Delta not accessible to larger aircraft. This mission was previously handled by USAF and Air America C-7s. During the first week of operation only minor delays were encountered and these were largely associated with the transfer of responsibility; however, all scheduled requirements were met.

(C) During the week of 8 October 1972 VNAF transport airlifted 76 percent of the total Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces fixed wing aircraft requirements. This was the highest weekly percentage since the beginning of the NGUYEN HUE Offensive. The VNAF transports airlifted 11,487 passengers and 663 tons of cargo. In addition, transport aircraft dropped 880 illumination flares in support of base defense. Aerial resupply continued at a high level during that week with airdrops being made at Ba To, Duc Co, and Minh Thanh. A total of 142,000 pounds of ammunition, food, and other supplies were air-dropped with 90,000 pounds recovered, constituting a 63 percent recovery rate.

The 27 percent nonrecovery was caused by high opening parachutes, failure of chutes to dereel, and troops in contact unable to reach drop zones. The majority of unrecovered loads were destroyed by airstrikes. The VNAF did not have the capability to perform airdrop missions above 10,000 feet due to inactive oxygen systems. The AFGP initiated action encouraging the VNAF to activate the oxygen systems on their airlift fleet.

(C) On 15 October 1972 a well-planned operation involving 11 VNAF C-123s airlifted 1,100 ARVN rangers with equipment from Quang Ngai to Pleiku. Backhaul of army and air force personnel and dependents from Pleiku to Quang Ngai provided exceptionally efficient utilization of VNAF airlift resources.

(C) VNAF transports flew 11,692 sorties and logged 19,175 hours. A total of 8,879 tons of cargo and 127,708 passengers were airlifted by the transport squadrons. During November 1972, the VNAF Airlift Command Center, with the cooperation of the USAF Tan Son Nhut Airlift Command Center, trained 12 VNAF personnel in center operations.¹⁴⁵

Helicopter Activity

(C) In early 1972 the VNAF activated four additional UH-1H squadrons, which increased the fleet to a total of 16 squadrons, all of which were operationally ready. The four new squadrons became operationally ready as much as three months ahead of schedule. The new squadrons activated were the 219th and 239th at Da Nang, 243d at Phu Cat, and the 245th at Bien Hoa. In addition, one CH-47 squadron was activated on 1 May 1972 at Phu Cat AB. That brought the total of helicopter squadrons to 18: 16 UH-1H and 2 CH-47 units.

(U) The UH-1H squadrons increased their instruments and night capabilities by conducting special training programs for their pilots. This movement in instrument and night proficiency greatly enhanced the VNAF air base perimeter security and medical evacuation effectiveness.

(C) Helicopter improvements such as the addition of the LAU 61, infrared suppression kits, and increased unit equipment (UE) contributed to the overall capability of the VNAF. The LAU 61, a 19 tube rocket pod, more than doubled the firepower of the helicopter gunships. The installation of the infrared suppression kits improved helicopter survivability in SA-7 high threat areas. The unit equipment for each helicopter squadron was raised from 31 to 33, which increased the number of gunships.

(S) The 3d Air Division was tasked by the Joint General Staff to provide two helicopter gunships with crews and maintenance personnel to operate from Nha Be for the purpose of providing

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gunship cover for shipping in the deep water channel between Saigon and Vung Tau. The VNAF assumed the mission on 1 April 1972. The "Night Hawk" team consisted of one UH-1H troop transport helicopter equipped with a specially designed light set and one or two UH-1H gunships. The UH-1H light ship, flying from 100 to 400 feet above ground level at approximately 40 knots, surveyed suspected enemy locations. The gunships flew in close proximity to the light ship so as to always be in position to immediately engage targets. The light ship was also the command and control aircraft with a ground officer aboard who authorized immediate clearance to engage ground targets. The Night Hawk was in contact with the Saigon artillery command post and could request immediate illumination or supporting fires from local artillery or other aircraft.

UH-1H Helicopters Received Under Project ENHANCE PLUS

(C) The VNAF received a UE increase of 280 helicopters through Project ENHANCE PLUS. AFGP/DO, together with the VNAF, developed a plan to employ the additional helicopters in the following manner:

- Activate three new squadrons of 38 UE each.
- Increase the UE of the 16 existing squadrons from 33 to 38.
- Activate a MEDEVAC/SAR force of 108 aircraft.

The VNAF/DO developed a plan to adjust the VNAF pilot strength in the existing squadrons to allow for the increase of assigned aircraft. AFGP/DO provided continuous advice and assistance to the VNAF/DCS operations as these plans were developed.

CH-47 Helicopter Program Accelerated Under ENHANCE PLUS

(S) Two CH-47 helicopter squadron activations were accelerated under ENHANCE PLUS. These activations were originally planned for the first quarter of FY 74. The VNAF, assisted by AFGP/DO, developed an accelerated plan which called for the first squadron to be activated on 15 January 1973 at Da Nang AB. The second squadron was planned for activation on 1 April 1973 at Binh Thuy AB.¹⁰⁰

TRAINING

(U) The AFGP Directorate of Training (AFGP/DT) provided assistance to the VNAF Deputy Chief of Staff for Training. The directorate administered and assisted the AFATs for training matters and administered mobile training teams (MTT) and mobile training detachments (MTD)

as well as security assistance and cost training programs. USAF advisors assisted with course development, planning, and curriculum development and coordinated with other agencies on training matters.

(U) The constant concern of the training directorate was to accelerate the pace to produce a self-sufficient and self-sustaining training capability within the VNAF. The USAF involvement in training was reduced as VNAF training capabilities improved. Many of the basic maintenance training fields became self-sufficient. However, when the VNAF assumed responsibility for two additional bases, training of support personnel increased. Even though great strides were made in maintenance training in-country, the introduction of several new and sophisticated weapons systems required more CONUS training.

(U) The training directorate hoped to have the revised undergraduate pilot CONUS training program ready to begin on 1 July 1972; however, the VNAF directed a one-year postponement. The program was revised to use the T-37 instead of the A-37 aircraft, and planning continued for the new program's inception on 1 July 1973. Additional CONUS undergraduate helicopter training was scheduled to commence July 1974.

(U) With the exception of training for pilots, professional skills, and some categories of instructors, every training requirement proposed for the FY 73 to FY 78 VNAF Security Assistance Program offshore was scrutinized to determine if there was any way to meet the requirements in-country. This produced dividends as the FY 73 to FY 78 program cost \$6 million less than the FY 72 to FY 77 program.

(U) As a result of the effort to move training in-country and develop more self-sufficiency in the VNAF training program, over 12,000 men completed training in-country and only 814 offshore during FY 72. The training directorate also convinced the VNAF to change a long-standing policy that those eliminated from pilot training in CONUS would immediately return home unless there was a navigator or weapons controller space available. However, if the trainee had a Vietnamese education equivalent to US high school completion, he was scheduled into a nonflying technical training space if recommended by USAF Air Training Command personnel and the Vietnamese Liaison Officer. This policy change saved US dollars and also increased the effectiveness of the training program. It also helped in filling training spaces that might have been lost due to a lack of qualified candidates.

(S) When the last class graduated on 20 June 1972, 1,476 undergraduate helicopter pilots had com-

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pleted training with the US Army in CONUS. Since August 1969, 1,859 VNAF officers and cadets had entered the CONUS program. The end of this program represented a significant milestone in VNAF development. The helicopter pilot output represented approximately 42 percent of the VNAF pilot force.

(S) The C-7 combat crew training squadron in-country training program, which began at Phan Rang AB on 15 October 1971, was completed on 30 October 1972. During that time nine VNAF pilots were selected and qualified as C-7 instructor pilots. They administered continuation training to combat crew training squadron graduates as they joined the activated squadrons.¹⁸⁷

(U) During FY 72 the English language training effort in support of VNAF training went from an almost entirely USAF effort to an almost entirely VNAF effort. The VNAF experienced a major problem in getting technicians who were language qualified to attend programmed training in the CONUS. There continued to be a critical shortage of qualified technicians in the VNAF to perform operational functions. Therefore, it was extremely difficult to pull a technician off the job to place him into language school for an extended period of time. In addition, it was difficult to maintain a high level of motivation with these students in language school because of financial difficulties. The students received no additional pay while in school, yet they had to maintain themselves away from their families. They were unable to do this on their salary. VNAF did very little to solve this problem, seemingly unconcerned above having to cancel training spaces for technicians. VNAF considered putting branch language schools at the various bases so that candidates could attend language school, work part time, and live at home. However, no positive action was taken.

(U) The VNAF also continued to have a problem with cross-channel coordination and communication. For example, VNAF logistics personnel wanted to delete the instructor training portion of the supply operations officer course, but VNAF training officials did not. Rather than get together and resolve the disagreement, the directorates tried to get the AFGP advisor to mediate a unified position. AFGP training personnel attempted through subtle suggestion, message and letter coordination, and written memos to get VNAF to rely on its own coordination in administering its training program.

(U) With the reversion of Okinawa to Japan in May 1972, training for VNAF at US installations on Okinawa terminated, since Japan did not permit training of third-country nationals on her territory. This training requirement was subsequently met in-country through the use of a mobile training team programmed by the Army Advisory Group.

(U) The FY 72 Military Assistance Training Program was plagued by a series of short notice cancellations which caused the Air Training Command considerable difficulty in trying to utilize vacated training spaces. Because of this, AFGP implemented a new procedure so that at least 60 days notice was given when cancelling training. Under this procedure, AFGP no longer got involved in trying to push through a last minute processing of training candidates. Difficulties were uncovered far enough in advance of class starting dates to give the VNAF time to go through its own channels to solve problems. These revised procedures helped make the VNAF almost totally self-sufficient in administering offshore training and gave the advisors a chance to assist the VNAF in refining the procedures.

(U) A VNAF communications and electronics (CE) school was established at Bien Hoa AB in May 1972 with 1,300 students programmed to be trained there over the next year. Considerable effort was expended by both the AFGP Directorate of Training and the Directorate of Communications-Electronics in establishing the school. The AFGP Training Directorate worked closely with the VNAF Training Plans and Curriculum Division in an effort to program and schedule classes for the VNAF CE school. As a result, 17 courses were established.¹⁸⁸

(U) Excellent progress has been made by VNAF in on the job training (OJT). The OJT program has maintained well over 1,200 personnel in training per month since July 1971. Prior to this the program was fortunate to have 600 trainees participating during a given month. OJT has progressed to the point that VNAF has the capability to effectively train its personnel in practically all enlisted career specialties. OJT courses ranged from communications and electronics to personnel and administration. Since July 1971 over 3,000 VNAF personnel have completed either familiarization or upgrade OJT. The statistics continued to be favorable as VNAF became increasingly self-sufficient.

(C) As a result of various mobile training team (MTT) efforts, the VNAF developed maintenance training capabilities for the C-130 aircraft, Seek Point System, and T-37B aircraft. The AC-119K MTT started cross-training AC-119G and C-119G aircrews and maintenance personnel into the AC-119K during December 1972. The first VNAF C-130A instructor aircrew took its final check ride on 28 December 1972.

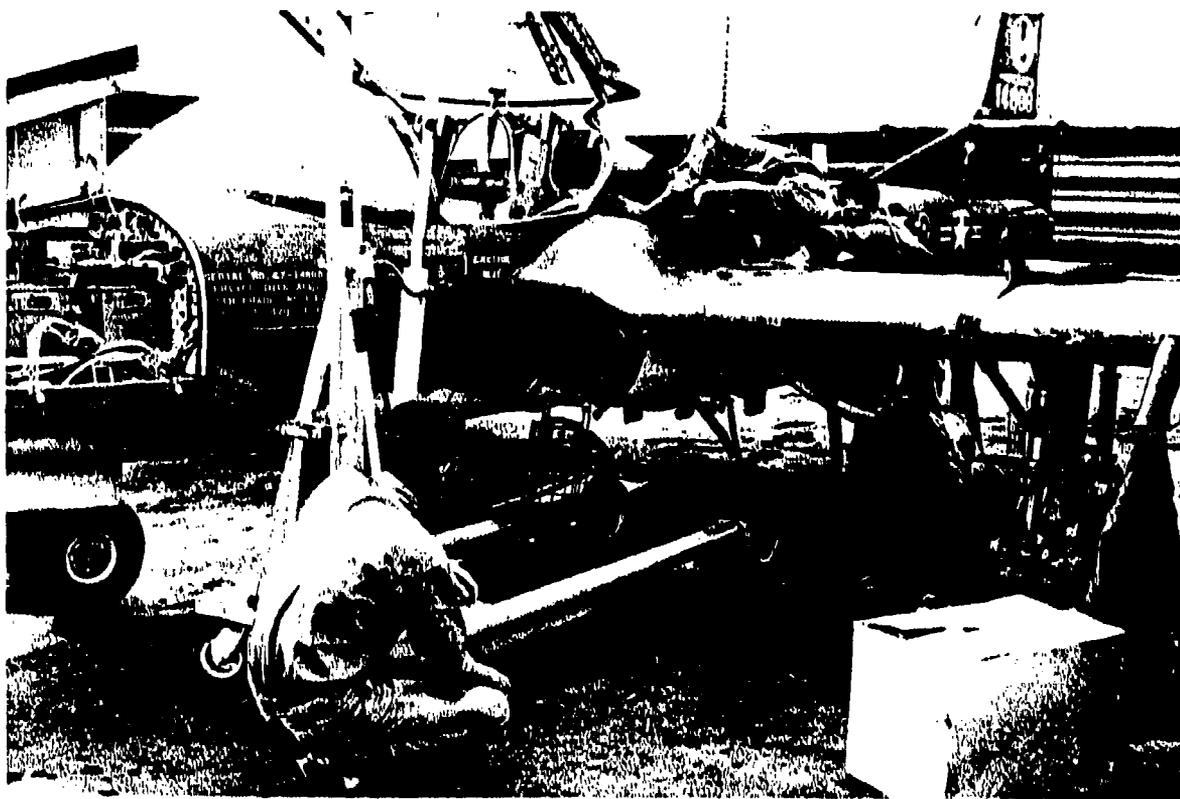
(C) The VNAF also began to transition O-1 and transport qualified pilots into the A-37 aircraft during December 1972, and VNAF A-37 pilots began to transition into the F-5A aircraft during the same period. The VNAF estimated having 126 qualified

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Mechanics replace a worn engine exhaust on an A-37 jet attack bomber.

pilots and four additional F-5 squadrons by June 1973.¹⁸⁰

(U) As a result of Project ENHANCE PLUS one new aircraft system, the C-130A, was introduced into the VNAF inventory, and the delivery of the AC-119K was greatly accelerated, involving a new training concept. MTTs, consisting of USAF CONUS-based and PACAF personnel, started VNAF aircrew and maintenance personnel cross-training into the new systems immediately after the aircraft deployment to Vietnam. The rapid influx of the new materials necessitated a maximum joint effort by AFGP and VNAF training directorates to start the training programs within the time frames dictated by political decisions.

(S) AFGP and the VNAF developed the basic plan by which VNAF C-123 aircrews and maintenance personnel transitioned into the C-130A aircraft. Tan Son Nhut AB was chosen as the training site. AFGP VNAF planning resulted in a similar request for immediate transition into the AC-119K aircraft by existing AC-119G and C-119G aircrews.

Notable Weaknesses in Training Programs

(U) Lack of English language qualified candidates was the limiting factor in the capability of the VNAF to provide students for CONUS training. Seventy-four students in the first quarter of FY 73 were either rescheduled or cancelled because of language deficiencies. The lack of qualified candidates at this time was the result of a failure to recruit into the VNAF between August 1971 and May 1972.

(U) In spite of renewed recruiting activities, in-country language training presented a problem that directly affected the ability of the VNAF to provide qualified candidates to meet CONUS training quotas. The VNAF English Language School, located at Nha Trang AB, was near its 350 student capacity. The majority of the 331 students awaiting entry into the school had English language comprehension (ECL) scores of 25 or less. The pressure on the Nha Trang school could have been lessened had the Joint General Staff acted favorably on a recommendation to lower the mandatory ECL score

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to less than 25 for entry into the Armed Forces Language School in Saigon

VNAF Squadron Activations

(C) VNAF activated two A-37 squadrons in 1972: The 532d Squadron at Phu Cat AB on 1 October and the 534th Squadron at Phan Rang AB on 1 November. Each of these squadrons was authorized 36 pilots and 24 aircraft. However, upon activation each squadron had only 15 pilots and 10 aircraft. VNAF later increased the number of aircraft in each squadron to the authorized level. In addition, VNAF, in coordination with AFGP, programmed additional students for CONUS to bring the squadrons to authorized pilot strength. By 31 December 1972 the 532d Squadron had 17 pilots and the 534th Squadron had 26 pilots. Both of these fledgling squadrons maintained good readiness rates with aircrew manning being the limiting factor. In December 1972 the assets of the 522d Squadron (F RF-5) were split and the 536th Squadron was activated at Bien Hoa AB. Both squadrons were programmed to operate using pooled aircraft and to comprise the training cadre for ENHANCE PLUS expansion requirements. Each squadron had been assigned 14 former A-37 pilots for transition and upgrade training in the F-5. Throughout the quarter 17 percent of all fighter activity was devoted to aircrew training.¹⁰⁰

TACTICAL AIR CONTROL

(S) Since January 1972 increased flexibility was demonstrated throughout the VNAF Tactical Air Control System (TACS) by deploying aircraft to the military region where the tactical situation warranted. The TACS division of the AFGP Operations Directorate was the only AFGP organization with advisors deployed with ground combat units throughout South Vietnam. Prior to the NGUYEN HUE Offense steady progress had been made toward the goal of total VNAF assumption of close air support responsibility in-country. One of USAF fighter squadrons was stationed at Bien Hoa (Military Region 3) and one at Da Nang (Military Region 1). USAF Forward Air Controllers were gradually withdrawn country-wide into a greatly decreased area of operations which centered at these two bases. The US Tactical Air Control Party and Direct Air Support Center personnel were progressively reduced to skeleton operations. VNAF fighter sorties were averaging approximately 155 close air support sorties daily. This amount of tactical air was sufficient under the low level of activity existing prior to the invasion.

(S) With the onset of the offensive in Military Region 1, the entire nature of the war changed. The VNAF was caught unprepared and ill equipped to repel the enemy mass of armor and artillery. To

ensure victory in conventional warfare, tactical air was required in large amounts to support ground forces. The VNAF Tactical Air Control Center deployed half a squadron of A-1s from III Corps and made other adjustments in fixed wing gunship and helicopter operations. AFGP advisors were forced into an operational role as the VNAF air space became saturated with the rapid and overwhelming increase of US and VNAF air activity. Seventh Air Force tactical air control personnel were rushed to forward areas to cope with this problem. Several interesting aspects arose out of the increase of US assets. Serious coordination problems occurred between Seventh Air Force and VNAF Tactical Air Control Centers because both VNAF and USAF aircraft were striking targets in the same areas and at the same time. Therefore, necessary coordination was immediately developed between the two air forces, dividing Vietnam into areas of responsibility with each air force augmenting the other during moments of tactical air shortages. VNAF surged to 210 fighter sorties per day while the Seventh Air Force provided from 300 to 600 sorties per day.

(S) AFGP representatives attended the VNAF Air Operations Command daily briefings held at the Tactical Air Control Center after 15 June 1972. The briefings covered activities in intelligence, tactical air, observation, helicopters, transports, air liaison, and air defense. Standards of performance in each of the above areas were thoroughly discussed. The presence of the AFGP representative was helpful in gaining early recognition of potential problem areas and assisting in their resolution. By 30 June 1972 the VNAF had made great strides in achieving self-sufficiency in the tactical air control system. Military Region 4 was completely self-sufficient and Military Region 3 was considered to be capable of operating without advisory assistance. Military Region 2 air liaison officers had made great progress, and the respect of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam commanders for VNAF capabilities increased to the point where VNAF airpower was increasingly preferred to US aircraft for close air support. Military Region 1 initially had the most serious problems concerning air liaison officer experience and performance. However, the quality of VNAF air support in Military Region 1 was outstanding, and the Tactical Air Control System started to make visible progress with the influx of more qualified personnel and increased advisory efforts. Continued advisory assistance was considered necessary in Military Region 1 until March 1973.¹⁰¹

(C) Realizing the need for VNAF Forward Air Controllers (FAC) capable of directing US air strikes, AFGP had long advocated initiation of a program to qualify these FACS, which was finally

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approved in November 1972. AFGP was given authority to designate as Victor FACs those VNAF FACs qualified to direct US air strikes, and a qualification program, begun on 30 November, was completed on 18 December 1972. At completion, 62 VNAF FACs had qualified as Victor FACs and were located as follows: 12 in Military Region 1, nine in Military Region 2, 18 in Military Region 3, and 23 in Military Region 4. AFGP urged maximum utilization of the Victor FACs in directing US airstrikes to maintain and enhance their proficiency.¹⁹²

INTELLIGENCE

(C) The last two sensor specialists assigned to the AFGP departed on 4 October 1972. During the 91 days they advised the Army of the Republic of Vietnam sensor program, numerous activities were pursued to make the program more viable. Four trips were made to Da Nang AB to provide on-the-spot advice to the ARVN and VNAF in establishing effective techniques for using the sensor equipment. Two VNAF sensor experts were assigned by the Joint General Staff to establish a training program in sensor operation and terminology, palletized airborne relay, plotter utilization, and related subjects.¹⁹³

(C) The specialists discovered several problems associated with the sensor operation other than the need for specialized training. The C-47 being used for the sensor relay platform had experienced maintenance aborts, weather aborts, and orbit pattern problems that prevented complete coverage of the sensor field. Four VNAF C-47s were assigned to fly two sorties per night to provide relay capability. Initial problems with covering the orbit were corrected with the result that usable information was attained from the system over an eight hour period each night. The orbit supported by this mission was called RED ORBIT. This orbit was within the capability of the VNAF to support with a relay capability. The other orbit within the range of VNAF capability was called BLUE ORBIT. However, it was not considered feasible for the VNAF to support BLUE ORBIT for relay purposes because of the C-47. The 10,000 feet altitude restriction on the C-47 made it too vulnerable to operate in high threat areas. There was also a question of whether terrain masking would render the relay aircraft ineffective because of the limited altitude. The USAF provided coverage by flying C-130s at an altitude of 22,000 feet.

(C) An additional problem of VNAF support for sensor implant continued to persist. Two aircraft, the RF-5 and the A-37, were proposed for VNAF use in orbit missions. By 7 October 1972 these aircraft had not been certified to use a modified SUU-

25 to implant sensors; however, an A-37 certification program was underway. Navigation equipment limitations also impeded the ability of these aircraft to implant sensors. Sensor runs would have to be made using visual reference for the drop, as sophisticated navigation equipment was not available to control the implant drop. A camera capability did exist to photograph the drop area to determine sensor location after drop.¹⁹⁴ Ultimately the sensor program was terminated in favor of higher priority VNAF requirements.

LOGISTICS

(C) VNAF agreed in principle to assume full responsibility for servicing USAF and US-designated aircraft throughout the Republic of Vietnam effective 30 days after a cease-fire agreement. A formal agreement between VNAF and USAF had been completed and was coordinated with all affected agencies during November 1972. This agreement, which served as one consolidated agreement for all VNAF bases, outlined fuel and oil servicing responsibilities that VNAF would provide USAF and incorporated VNAF furnished support at Da Nang and Bien Hoa ABs which had been USAF supported. VNAF assumption of this support was contingent upon reduced USAF requirements at the time specified in the agreement, transfer of in-place hydrant systems and associated equipment at Da Nang AB, training of VNAF fuels personnel by USAF on operation of the Da Nang AB hydrant system, and capability of VNAF to handle the additional workload. To facilitate and minimize fuel support requirements, all major commands were being requested to schedule flights to keep fuel loading requirements within the Republic of Vietnam to an absolute minimum. One base not affected was Tan Son Nhut, where contract coverage to fuel planes remained. Final signing and publication of the VNAF/USAF agreement was effected by the middle of November.¹⁹⁵ The supply and fuels training contract program was begun early at some bases and was fully operational before the end of November 1972.

(C) A total of 1,103 vehicles were transferred to the VNAF by the USAF on 7 November 1972. This transfer involved both vehicles presently in-country and those due in from outside sources.

(C) Hospital equipment, both medical and non-medical, was transferred to the VNAF by the 13th Air Force Medical Equipment Management Office. Equipment was located in facilities operated by the 377th USAF Hospital at Tan Son Nhut AB and the 6251st USAF Dispensary at Bien Hoa AB.

(C) On 7 November 1972 the US Army 1st Aviation Brigade transferred to the VNAF the shop sets, tool kits, special tools, and ground sup-

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port equipment required to support UH-1H and CH-47 helicopters. This equipment was transferred at Da Nang, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Binh Thuy, and Tan Son Nhut ABs.

(C) The VNAF in-country cargo backlog increased steadily from approximately 100,000 pounds to 300,000 pounds for all destinations by 10 November 1972. This was primarily the result of shipping orders for the movement of vehicles, ammunition, and other high priority cargo. This figure was expected to remain at a high level, perhaps rising as high as 600,000 pounds. This backlog, although considerably greater than had previously been experienced, was handled well. Special mission aircraft were arranged for the delivery of a majority of the cargo.

(U) By the end of December 1972 several changes to weapons systems programs had begun to have an impact on cargo aircraft weapons systems management. The introduction of the C-130A to the VNAF inventory had a significant impact on the non-operational repair and supply (NORS) area. NORS conditions had begun to occur, and repair cycle assets had been generated. The C-130A initial spares support list was received and logistics support planning began. U-type inquiries were submitted in order to begin follow-up actions on C-130A NORS items. Resupply actions and repair activities were carefully managed until the VNAF logistics system could fully accommodate the C-130A.

(U) With the introduction of the C-130A, authority was obtained to provide these aircraft with an aerial fuel delivery capability. Two C-130A Bulk Aerial Fuel Delivery Systems were authorized. These systems were similar to the ones VNAF used with the C-123 aircraft; however, they had two tanks with a storage capacity of 6,000 gallon, three times that of the C-123.¹⁰⁰

(C) Prior to the cease-fire the VNAF aircraft inventory was greatly increased. By November 1972 the VNAF had received 286 UH-1Hs, 90 A-37s, 23 CH-47s, 23 EC-47s, 32 C-130s, 28 A-1H/Es, 118 F-5s, 4 C-7s, 22 AC-119Ks, and 1 C-123. In November, 78 percent of the fighters, 61 percent of the helicopters, 59 percent of the transports, 83 percent of the liaison aircraft, and 72 percent of the gunships were in operationally ready status for an overall VNAF fleet rate of 69 percent. The number of aircraft in the VNAF inventory totaled 2,105 in November 1972.¹⁰⁷

Maintenance Support

(C) Air Force Logistics Command Rapid Area Maintenance (RAM) teams were kept busy throughout the Republic of Vietnam in spite of the increased VNAF repair efforts. Along with assisting the VNAF's growing self-sufficiency in aircraft

crash and battle damage repair, the RAM teams provided valuable assistance to the VNAF logistics system. Primary work was on the UH-1s, but assistance was provided on the A-1s, A-37s, and the other VNAF first line aircraft.

(S) All US facilities were title transferred to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces in November 1972. Bien Hoa and Da Nang ABs and Monkey Mountain radar site were transferred as single entities from MACV to the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces on 6 November 1972. Facility and equipment inventory inspections were issued by the component services to the base civil engineers, and the inventory was completed within 50 days. Title transfer of Tan Son Nhut AB was held in abeyance pending a decision on retention of US ownership of certain areas. Nha Trang, Binh Thuy, Pleiku, and Phan Rang ABs were also transferred; however, only a small number of USAF facilities remained at each of these bases, and completion of inventory was accomplished by the end of November 1972. Transfer actions were previously completed at Soc Trang and Phu Cat ABs under the Consolidated Republic of Vietnam Improvement and Modernization Program, and no further transfer actions were required. The Joint General Staff directed that the VNAF accept all the facilities on the bases regardless of condition. A letter of agreement between the governments of the US and the Republic of Vietnam provided for occupancy of facilities by US military and civilian personnel until no longer required.

(S) Perhaps one of the most effective weapons of the entire war was the CBU-55, a fuel aerosol bomb introduced for VNAF use in 1972. The weapon consisted of three parachute retarded bomblets that dispensed ethylene oxide in a cloud which penetrated into bunkers and other hiding places. Delayed ignition created high overpressure which exploded light mines, destroyed light fortifications, and eliminated personnel. Although four VNAF bases received a supply of the bombs, Da Nang and Bien Hoa ABs were the first to expend the ammunition when the NGUYEN HUE Offensive began in Quang Tri Province. By the middle of April, Seventh Air Force had provided the VNAF with 654 CBU-55 bombs. Unofficial reports of the effectiveness of the 79 CBU-55s expended by 17 April 1972 indicated outstanding results had been achieved against massed enemy troops. Reports reaching the AFGP indicated that on one particular mission a concentration of 400 enemy personnel were killed by CBU-55s. After the VNAF pilots had expended the bombs, AFGP debriefed them to determine if the ammunition was released in the proper parameters against a valid target in order to assess the overall effectiveness. Accurate bomb damage assess-

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emplified by the Vietnamization of the Interdiction Program in which the VNAF was to activate five short takeoff and landing (STOL) aircraft squadrons for participation in the 1972-78 dry season operations (Project CREDIBLE CHASE). Fortunately, delays in the testing of the aircraft and other events led to an indefinite postponement of the STOL operation. Had the program proceeded on schedule, the VNAF would have been required to activate the squadrons between November 1972 and January 1973. There was no planning for advanced procurement of personnel to complement the squadrons nor for the beddown of the 200 aircraft involved. The VNAF would have been required to enter a crash training program and redirect personnel from existing units. No consideration was given to the impact of this type action on the mission of the remaining force. While this was the most graphic case there were other examples of similar US unilateral planning.

(S) RVNAF was handicapped by their almost rigid insistence that no action could be taken prior to final approval of a plan, regardless of the circumstances involved. In the case of the RVNAF Force Structure Review for FY 73, the MACV approved proposal indicated that an increase of over 14,000 personnel for the VNAF in FY 73 was appropriate. Despite VNAF pleas for permission to recruit some of the proposed 14,000 in advance of DOD approval to soften the impact of up to two years of training lead time for aircrews, the Joint General Staff insisted no action could be taken until final approval of the Force Structure Review for FY 73. It required two letters from COMUSMACV to the Chairman of the Joint General Staff and vigorous prompting through MACV staff channels before the Joint General Staff acceded to recruitment of some 2,000 personnel in advance of FY 73. This recruitment authority, effective on 1 May 1972, was in reality a small concession. As a result of this type of delay the attainment of the VNAF FY 73 program objectives would not be realized until late FY 74. A lack of urgency on the part of the VNAF headquarters staff to consider long range planning continued.

(C/NF) The most critical problem the VNAF faced was lack of time. The VNAF was being forced to develop at an accelerated pace with a system

and culture which was geared to gradual change. VNAF simply did not have time to develop the necessary middle management and logistical system and gain experience to make full utilization of their newly acquired technical skills. Also, there was the language barrier, which required that VNAF personnel learn English to use technical orders, training outlines, or even to order parts. Efforts were initiated to translate these required materials into Vietnamese; however, the results were extremely limited.⁸⁰¹

(U) The VNAF cause was progressing well despite all the deficiencies mentioned. Considering the rapid expansion of the VNAF and the unusual demands placed upon it as a result of the invasion, it is a credit to its professional ability that it has manned and maintained itself in such an effective manner.

SUMMARY

(TS) At the end of March 1973 VNAF was programmed to achieve a force level of 64,900 personnel with 66 squadrons consisting of 1,099 fixed and 1,098 rotary wing aircraft. This force level was designed to permit operations at the pre-1972 level of intensity. The forces were generally distributed to the military regions according to the threat but were capable of being shifted quickly between regions. There was sufficient airlift capacity to meet combat support requirements provided the airlift could be properly managed and supported logistically.⁸⁰² Reconnaissance capability was vested in seven RF-5A aircraft plus 12 RC-47s and the thousand plus helicopter force distributed throughout the four military regions. The VNAF possessed some air defense capability in their F-5A aircraft and was projected to gain increased capability with the introduction of the F-5E aircraft. All VNAF squadrons were scheduled to be operationally ready by July 1974. A standardization program for the monitoring and testing of operational capabilities was under development. Force structure and equipment on hand were considered adequate to support RVNAF operations; however, training was needed to get newly activated units operational. It was noted that VNAF capability might rapidly degrade after US withdrawal if logistics support was not continued on a high priority basis or its management did not improve.⁸⁰³

FREE WORLD MILITARY ASSISTANCE FORCES

(U) In April 1964 President Johnson publicly requested that other nations of the Free World contribute military assistance to the Republic of Vietnam. Prior to the request only the United States and Australia had supported the Republic with military assistance. After receiving assistance

from US Government agencies in planning requirements the Government of Vietnam in July 1964 formally requested assistance from 36 free world nations. By January 1965 at least 26 nations had positively responded to the request.

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(U) Each country which contributed troops to what was collectively known as Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) concluded military working arrangements with COMUSMACV. Based on extensions of the Pentilateral Agreement of 1950 which governed US military assistance to Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and the French Union in Indochina, the arrangement specified command and control relationships, logistical responsibilities, and the rights, privileges, and exemptions to be accorded to the FWMAF personnel. While the exception of Korea, each country exercised command of its own troops, while operational control was generally exercised by COMUSMACV. The relationship between COMUSMACV and Republic of Korea Forces, (ROKFFV) was one of coordination and cooperation. Coordination and control of FWMAF actions was the task of policy councils consisting of the Chief of the RVNAF Joint General Staff, COMUSMACV, and senior commanders of concerned FWMAF units.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

(U) Throughout their stay in the Republic of Vietnam, Australian and New Zealand forces under the operational control of COMUSMACV worked closely together. The first Australian contingent arrived in Vietnam in 1962; by 1967 it had grown into the 1st Australian Task Force (ATF), which included not only army units, but also five Royal Australian Air Force squadrons and Royal Australian Navy destroyers which operated one at a time with the US 7th Fleet in the South China Sea and Gulf of Tonkin. Royal Australian Army units were engaged in combat operations and civic action projects in Phuoc Tuy Province.²⁰⁰¹

(U) The first New Zealand unit, an army engineer team which assisted the Government of Viet-

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THAILAND

(U) The Royal Thai Government first dispatched military assistance to the Republic of Vietnam in September 1964. By late 1967 Thai forces, which had initially consisted of a small Royal Thai Air Force training team, had been expanded to include an infantry division and naval units consisting of one LST and one patrol gunboat medium (FGM). The infantry division, officially designated the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force (RTAVF), was based at Camp Bearcat northeast of Saigon and conducted operations in Long Thanh District, Bien Hoa Province and the western part of Xuan Loc District, Long Khanh Province. Its mission was to conduct combat operations in the above area of operations, providing protection to the southern flank of Long Thanh North Airfield and keeping Highway 15 between Vung Tau and Long Binh open to friendly traffic. In addition to their combat role, Thai forces engaged in numerous civic action projects. Of particular note were Thai mobile aid and medical units that visited remote areas and a

medical team stationed at the Thu Duc Health Center in Gia Dinh Province on the outskirts of Saigon.²¹³

(U) The redeployment of Thai forces began in July 1971 with the last combat units withdrawing on 1 May 1972, leaving a small liaison element in Saigon. This element remained in Vietnam until after the signing of the cease-fire, departing on 2 March 1973.²¹⁴

THE PHILIPPINES

(U) Philippine humanitarian aid to the people of Vietnam began before the signing of the 1954 Geneva Accords. In 1953 a privately sponsored volunteer group of doctors, nurses, and psychological operations personnel known as Operation Brotherhood was formed. Arriving in Vietnam in early 1954, it was divided into small teams which provided medical assistance, engaged in civic action projects, and conducted psychological operations in an attempt to win the support of the people for the Government of Vietnam.



Thai soldiers distribute captured VC rice near Camp Bearcat.

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CPT Julie Manalo, a dental officer, removes a villager's decayed tooth.

(U) The Philippine Government first became involved in Vietnam in 1964 responding to a request for aid made by the Government of Vietnam. Initially, a 34-man contingent known as PHILCON I composed of physicians, surgeons, psychological operations specialists, and rural development workers from the Armed Forces of the Philippines was sent to Vietnam where it was split up and employed in Tay Ninh and Kontum Provinces and the cities of My Tho and Phu Cuong.

(U) In 1966 the Philippine Government responded to a further request for aid which resulted in the deployment of the Philippine Civic Action Group, Vietnam (PHILCAGV) in the fall of 1966. The PHILCAGV, which by the end of 1967 numbered 2,020 personnel, consisted of an engineer construction unit, medical and rural development teams, and a security battalion, a field artillery battery, a logistics support company, and a headquarters element. According to a military working agree-

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ment signed on 20 July 1960, PHILCAGV missions were determined by the Free World Military Assistance Policy Council with command and control vested in the Commanding General, PHILCAGV. PHILCAGV activities were grouped into four programs: Engineering Civic Action (ECAP), Medical and Dental Civic Action (MEDCAP), Miscellaneous Environmental Improvement (MEIP), and the PHILCAGV to People Program (PPP).²¹⁶

(U) In 1969 the presence of the PHILCAGV in the Republic of Vietnam became a public and political issue. As a result, the Government of the Philippines withdrew the PHILCAGV in December 1969. In its place a reconstituted PHILCONV totaling approximately 48 personnel was deployed to Vietnam. The PHILCONV undertook surgical, medical, dental, and rural health activities in Tay Ninh, Binh Duong, Dinh Tuong, and Hau Nghia Provinces. Between 1 January and 31 December 1972 it provided the services given in Figure C-20.

On 2 March 1973 following the signing of the cease-fire, the PHILCONV returned to the Philippines.²¹⁷

REPUBLIC OF CHINA

(U) The Republic of China began to support the

Government of Vietnam with military assistance in the form of a political warfare training team in October 1964. According to Military Working Arrangements signed by the Commander, Republic of China, Military Assistance Group Vietnam (COMROCMAGV) and the MACV Chief of Staff in 1965 and 1968, command of all ROC units and personnel assigned to ROCMAGV was vested in COMROCMAGV, guidance on general concept of employment was furnished by the Free World Military Assistance Policy Council, and the Government of Vietnam Ministry of Health exercised operational control of the Republic of China provincial health assistance teams in coordination with USAID.

(U) From 1964 to March 1973 the ROCMAGV continuously provided political warfare advice to RVNAF. Consisting of 31 personnel, it had teams assigned to the Ministry of Defense and Naval and Air Force Headquarters in Saigon, the POLWAR College in Dalat, and at the headquarters of each military region. The ROCMAGV did not begin to redeploy its personnel until after the conclusion of the cease-fire. Of the 31 personnel, 26 departed on 12 March and the remainder departed on 26 March 1973.²¹⁷

PHILCONV ACTIVITIES (1972)

TEAM	MEDICAL CASES	SURGICAL CASES	DENTAL CASES	X-RAY EXAMS	EVAC
Tay Ninh Surgical and Dental Team.....	6	10,995	11,553	4,071	129
Binh Duong Surgical Team.....	0	15,582	0	8,000	241
Dinh Tuong Surgical Team.....	42,451	18,080	0	7,986	124
Hau Nghia Rural Health Team.....	20,040	742	13,424	0	245
TOTAL.....	62,537	45,408	24,977	20,057	739

Source: PHILCONV

Figure: C-20

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MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO THE RVNAF—ANNEX C

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3. Plan (S), MACV, JGS/RVNAF, 7 Nov 71, Subj: Combined Strategic Objectives Plan (U), pp 1-2, 1-5, 1-7, Gp-Not Stated.
4. Same as #3, p 1-1.
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8. Ibid., pp 3-4.
9. Ibid., p 4.
10. Ibid., pp 4-6.
11. Plan (C), GVN Central Pacification and Development Council, undtd, Subj: Four Year Community Defense and Local Development Plan (1972-1975) (U), Gp-Not Stated.
12. Same as #6, p 6.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p 7.
15. Plan (S), MACV, 25 Jun 72, Subj: COMUSMACV OPLAN J-214 (U), p IV, GDS-Dec 80.
16. Same as #6, pp 7-8.
17. Ibid., p 10.
18. Ibid., pp 10-11.
19. Same as #5, pp II-20, II-21.
20. Same as #6, pp 12-13.
21. Ibid., p 17.
22. Ibid., pp 13-14.
23. Ibid., pp 14-15.
24. Ibid., p 15.
25. Ltr (U), MACJ3-03, 25 Dec 71, Subj: Activation of MACV Special Troops.
26. Same as #6, p 16.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., p 17.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., pp 17-18.
31. Same as #5, p II-22.
32. Same as #6, pp 18-19.
33. Fact Book (TS), MACV, 8 Dec 71, Subj: SEA-CORD Meeting (U), Tab D-2, Gp-Not Stated.
34. Rpt (S), MACV, 1 Jul 71, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure List, FY 71-73 Plan (U), p 7, Gp-4.
35. Msg (TS), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV, 230556Z Oct 71, Subj: Force Structure Review FY 73 (U), Gp-4.
36. Ltr (TS), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 12 Jan 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Review, FY 73 (U), Gp-4.
37. Ibid.
38. Msg (TS), JCS to CINCPAC, 201703Z Mar 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Review, FY 73 (U), Gp-4.
39. Msg (TS), CINCPAC to COMUSMACV, 170619Z May 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Review, FY 73 (U), Gp-4.
40. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 191007Z Jun 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Review FY 73 (U), GDS-82.
41. Msg (TS), JCS to COMUSMACV, 031752Z Jul 72, Subj: RVN Armed Forces Force Structure Review, FY 73 (U), GDS-82.
42. Msg (TS), COMUSMACV to CJCS, et al, 280524Z Jul 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Review, FY 73 (U), GDS-82.
43. Ltr (TS), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 27 Jan 73, Subj: FY 74 RVNAF Force Structure Review (U), GDS-83.
44. Ltr (S), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 30 Apr 72, Subj: Long Range RVNAF Force Structure Plan (U), GP-4.
45. Msg (S), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 210116Z Jun 72, Subj: Long Range RVNAF Force Structure Plan (U), GDS-80.
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48. Ibid.
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50. DF (U), MACDP to MACC/S, 11 Aug 72, Subj: Revision of General Mobilization Center Order 3/68.
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53. Same as #43.
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58. Msg (S), COMUSMACV to CINCPAC, 180545Z Dec 72, Subj: RVNAF Force Structure Change Proposals (U), GDS-82.

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61. Same as #46.
62. Memo (C), JGS/J3 to MACDO, 13 May 72, Subj: Transformation of RF Groups to Battalions, Increase of STCPs (U), Gp-1.
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64. Same as #43.
65. Same as #5, pp VIII-23 to VIII-25.
66. Same as #46.
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72. DF (C) MACDP-ADV, 22 Jan 73, Subj: RVNAF Desertion and Desertion Control Programs (U), GDS-79.
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76. Same as #73, Sec I, pp 5-12.
77. Rpt (C), MACT-PP, 14 Feb 72, Subj: Monthly Historical Summary (U), p II-1, Gp-Not Stated.
78. Ibid., p II-2; Rpt (C), MACT-PP, 17 Mar 72, Subj: Monthly Historical Report (U), p II-4, GDS-Not Stated; Rpt (C), MACT-PP, 18 Apr 72, Subj: Monthly Historical Summary (U), p II-2, GDS-Not Stated; Rpt (C), AAG-PPSA, 18 May 72, Subj: Monthly Historical Summary (U), GDS-Not Stated; Same as #73, p II-2; Same as #75, Rpt (C), p II-2; Rpt (C) AAGPP-R 19 Jun 72, Subj: Monthly Historical Summary (U), p II-2, GDS-Not Stated; Rpt (C), AAGPP-R, 19 Oct 72, Subj: Quarterly Historical Summary (U), GDS-Not Stated; Rpt (C), AAGPP-R, 19 Jan 73, Subj: Quarterly Historical Summary (U), pp IV-5 to IV-6, GDS-79. Note: The Army Advisor Group submission changed from a monthly to a quarterly report in July 1972. The last monthly report was for June 72, dated 15 Jul 72. Thereafter quarterly reports were submitted dated 19 Oct 72 and 19 Jan 73. Separate reports were rendered for the periods 1-14 May 72 and 15-31 May 72.
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80. Rpt (U), JG F. P. Sorong, Subj: Survey of Motivation in the NVA/VC Forces and RVNAF, Saigon, May 72.
81. Same as #77, p II-2; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 17 Mar 72, p II-4; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 18 Apr 72, p II-2; Same as #73, pp II-2 to II-3; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 19 Oct 72, p II-6.
82. Memo (U), AAGPP-R, undtd, Subj: Meeting of JGS/CTC Morale Motivation Committee, 15 Aug 72; Rpt (C), Same as #78, 19 Oct 72.
83. Same as #73; Same as #78.
84. Rpt (C), Same as #78, 19 Jan 73.
85. Same as #78; Ltr (U), GEN Abrams to GEN Vien, 29 May 72, Incl 1 to Sec. II.
86. Same as #78, Rpt (C), 17 Mar 72, p III-2; Same as #73, p III-3.
87. Same as #77, p II-3; JTD (U), Aug 72, Subj: AAG Joint Table of Distribution, Vol I, Military and DOD Civilian Strengths, pp I-47, 50, 57, 63.
88. Same as #77, p III-6; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 15 Jul 72, p V-7; Interview (U), MAJ Heldstab, AAGP-R, by MAJ Walter S. Dillard, MACV MHB, 8 Nov 72, Saigon.
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92. Same as #77, p III-3; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 18 Apr 72, p III-3.
93. Same as #78.
94. Same as #78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, pp V-15, V-16.
95. Same as #78, Rpt (C), 18 May 72, p III-3.
96. Same as #73, p III-4; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 19 Oct 72, p V-9.
97. Same as #78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73.
98. Same as #78, Rpts (C), 19 Oct 72, pp V-10-11, & 19 Jan 73, p V-15.
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101. Same as #73, p IV-2; Same as #77, p IV-4, IV-5; Same as #78, Rpt (C), 17 Mar 72, p IV-4,

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- & 18 May 72, p IV-3, & 19 Oct 72, pp V-8, V-9, & 19 Jan 73, pp V-II, V-12.
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103. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 18 Apr 72, p V-3; I + (U), MG G. H. Woodward, MACV Chief of Staff of LTG Nguyen Van Man's, Chief of Staff, Joint General Staff, 24 Oct 72.
104. Same as # 77, p IV-3; Same as #78, Rpts (C), 18 Apr 72, p IV-3, & 19 Jun 72, p V-2, & 19 Oct 72, pp V-3, V-4, & 18 May 72, pp IV-2, IV-3; Same as #73, Rpt (C), p V-2; Same as #75, Rpt (C), p V-2.
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106. Same as #77, p IV-2; Same as #78, Rpts (C), 18 Apr 72, pp IV-1, IV-2, & 18 May 72, p IV-2, & 11 Jun 72, p V-1, & 19 Oct 72, pp V-1, V-2; Same as #73, p IV-1.
107. Same as # 105, p 14.
108. Same as # 78, Rpts (C), 18 May 72 & 19 Oct 72, pp V-3, V-4 & 19 Jan 73, pp V-1 to V-3; Same as # 73, pp V-1, V-2.
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110. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Oct 72, p V-3.
111. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, pp V-4, V-5.
112. Same as # 105, pp 8-10.
113. Same as # 77, pp IV-2, V-3; Same as #78, Rpts (C), 17 Mar 72, p IV-3, & 18 Apr 72, pp IV-2, IV-3, & 18 May 72, p IV-2.
114. Same as # 73, pp V-1-2; Same as # 75, p V-2; Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Oct 72, pp V-6 and V-7.
115. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, p V-4.
116. Same as # 105, pp 7-8.
117. Same as # 75, p V-2; Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jun 72, p V-2.
118. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, p V-8.
119. Same as # 105, pp 10-11.
120. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, pp V-9, V-10.
121. Same as # 105, p 15.
122. Same as # 77, p IV-4; Same as #87, pp I-24, I-25.
123. Same as # 105, p 20.
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126. Same as # 78, Rpts (C), 17 Mar 72, p VI-3, & 18 Apr 72, p IV-4.
127. Same as # 105, p 19.
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131. Same as # 77, p IV-1; Same as # 78, Rpts (C), 18 Apr 72, p IV-1 & 18 May 72, pp IV-1, IV-2 & 19 Oct 72, p V-1.
132. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, p V-1.
133. Ibid., p II-5.
134. Same as # 5, Vol II, pp I-7 to I-10.
135. Same as #87, JTD (U), pp 47-70.
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141. Same as # 78, Rpt (C), 19 Jan 73, pp VI-1, VI-2.
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146. Same as # 73, p I-11.
147. Same as # 73; Same as # 75, Rpt (C); Same as # 78, Rpts (C), 19 Jun 72, & 8 Oct 72, & 19 Jan 73.
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150. Rpt (U), CHNAVADVGRP, undtd, Subj: Special Three Part Profile of NAG.
151. Chart (U), CHNAVADVGRP, 28 Sep 72, Subj: Naval Advisory Group Field Organization.
152. Rpt (S), CHNAVADVGRP, 28 Feb 73, Subj: Command History Input Update (U), p 2, GDS-Not Stated.
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ANNEX D

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DEVELOPMENT

(U) The year 1972 saw the Republic of Vietnam continue to assume more and more responsibility for the affairs of the country, both in terms of national economic planning and in implementation of national policy for security and political and economic development at the local level. Although the enemy offensive caused setbacks to the pacification efforts, particularly in the areas hardest hit by hostilities, and funds had to be diverted from peacetime projects for repair of war damages, the Government of South Vietnam continued political and economic reforms designed to fulfill the aspirations of the people and win their support. Many long-standing programs, such as the Territorial Forces and the National Police, gained maturity as their strengths reached authorized levels. Political reforms designed to simplify and streamline govern-

ment at the village and hamlet level were put into effect during the latter half of 1972. Finally, land reform and other significant economic programs to better the material well-being of the average South Vietnamese citizen. In addition to these efforts by the Directors of CORDS, MACV also assisted the South Vietnamese at the national level through the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Economic Affairs (MACEA), which insured that DOD would make maximum contribution to the solution of Vietnamese economic and financial problems, particularly those with military implications. As the United States military presence faded after the cease-fire in January 1973, Vietnam was to continue to receive American economic support but would gain more complete control over the destiny of their national development.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

(U) Although the primary responsibility for US policy and operations in the economy of South Vietnam lies with the Embassy and USAID, MACV had the responsibility to support these policies and operations, especially in those areas where military activities had a direct impact on economic matters and where US military presence, programs, and assets could contribute to economic stability and development. The Department of Defense (DOD) was directly involved in four major economic support programs: plaster purchases, which had been a primary contributor to Republic of Vietnam foreign exchange balances; the provision of military assistance service funded (MASF) material to the Ministry of National Defense (MOND) the construction of the transportation and communication infrastructure; and in-country procurement of goods and services. The Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Economic Affairs (MACEA) was established to insure the success of these efforts and to provide economic analyses, program coordination, advice, and liaison with US and Vietnamese agencies, both military and civilian.¹

(U) Since its establishment, the focus of MACEA activities shifted in response to the missions of the Department of Defense, the reduction in strength of MACV, and the demands of the economic environment of Vietnam. A comparison of the activities described in the 1971 MACV Command History

with those described below will demonstrate these shifts and reflections. An example was the shift away from diverse and detailed economic analyses of the Vietnamese economy and commercial activities toward increased advisory involvement with the MOND and the Joint General Staff (JGS). This change assured that Vietnamese military activities not only were consistent with national economic objectives but also made the maximum contribution to the matching of Vietnamese economic and financial needs to capabilities.

(U) At the end of 1971 MACEA consisted of the Deputy Chief of Staff, the Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff, an enlisted office staff, and three branches: Procurement and Construction, Resources, and Combined Analysis. By mid-1972, as MACV's strength declined, MACEA reorganized into two branches: DOD Programs and GVN Resources and Combined Analysis. However, as the year progressed, it became obvious that the Programs and Resources Branch had developed two distinct functions: DOD programs and MOND/JGS advisory activities. The office assumed the structure of three teams, interacting, but with the following primary activities: monitoring, analyzing, and reporting to DOD the general economic conditions of the Republic; monitoring, influencing, and reporting to DOD the results of the five major DOD economic support programs; and monitoring, influencing, and advising MOND and JGS on military economic affairs.

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REVIEW OF THE ECONOMY OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, 1972²

(U) In broad outline, the 1972 economic situation was dominated by three major events: the business recession which began in the first quarter, the effects of the NVA invasion in the second quarter, and the uncertainties surrounding the cease-fire negotiations of the fourth quarter. Before business activity could respond fully to the November 1971 reforms and changes in legal exchange rate ceilings, the NVA invasion had disrupted much of the normal economic activity of the country. As a result at year's end the economy was still in a depressed condition, with the investor and consumer awaiting outcomes of the cease-fire negotiations.

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ECONOMIC PROGRAM AND POLICIES

(U) Despite the uncertainty of the future, South Vietnamese programs and policies continued to emphasize four objectives: development to increase domestic production so that the nation could sustain an adequate standard of living, a reasonable level of government expenditures, and a reduction in dependence on US aid; reduction of government expenditures to levels supportable by domestic production; increase in domestic revenues to support required public programs; and provision of an economic climate to foster economic stability and growth.

(U) The Ministry of National Planning and Development completed its four year plan covering the period 1973 to 1976. Since the planners were unable to consider the effects of the invasion, much of the plan needed revision. Limitation in available resources also caused the 1973 budget to omit many proposed development programs. However, the planning process provided the South Vietnamese experience for future economic coordination.

(U) During the year the government began a major tax reform program, with emphasis on equity, simplification, and increased revenue. Six new tax decree laws, including the value-added tax, were promulgated, and the Ministry of Finance substantially changed the excise taxes. In addition, there were efforts to reform and strengthen the administrative apparatus of the tax system and to improve the efficiency and integrity of tax collection and enforcement.

(U) One of the most progressive of the economic policies was export promotion. The exchange rate for export earned dollars was set a premium above the importing exchange rate. In addition, the government moved vigorously to promote exports through its new Export Development Center and liberalized market development incentives. In June the government promulgated a liberal investment law to encourage domestic investment and provide

a long range stimulus to foreign investment in South Vietnam. In brief, this investment law provided new incentives and broad guarantees for eligible investing firms.

(U) While there were many signs of investment interest during the year, most investors waited for discernible improvements in the security situation. Exceptions were exporters, benefiting from the government promotion campaign, and those firms engaged in MACV local procurement efforts. Continued interest in longer term investment was evidenced by the large number of loan applications made to the Government's National Economic Development Fund (NEDF). The NEDF, established in March with a \$VN 10 billion grant of US counterpart funds, approved approximately \$VN 3.8 billion in loan commitments covering a wide range of agricultural and industrial projects. However, only a fraction of these agreements had been exercised and the investments consummated by early 1973.

MONETARY STABILITY

(C) Until 1971, when the rate of retail price increases fell to 14 percent, inflation consistently remained above 30 percent per year. The rate for 1972 was approximately 22 percent as reflected by the USAID Saigon Retail Price Index. However, analysis shows that, contrary to the experience of previous years where the inflationary pressure was due to Government of Vietnam budgetary deficits and substantive US expenditures, the price increases were caused in large measure by disruptions of supply conditions resulting from the NVA invasion, deliberate national economic policies such as exchange rate changes, and the late summer drought.

(C) Much of the 6 percent increase in price level in the first quarter was attributed to the impact of higher exchange rates, increased taxes, and efforts to rationalize price structure by eliminating subsidies. The second quarter saw a pronounced slowing in the rate of inflation with the index rising only 1 percent for the period, a pattern which reflected the consumer caution and generally stagnant business conditions and followed the invasion. Beginning about the end of June, demand began to pick up, concentrated on foodstuffs, clothing, beer, soft drinks, and cigarettes, rather than durables or investment goods. During the third quarter, the index rose 11 percent primarily due to increases in the price of rice and protein items. The fourth quarter had smaller price increases, predominantly brought about by the interdiction of some of the principal supply routes into Saigon.

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The rise in rice prices, 25 percent over the year, was due to the above factors plus increased prices for imported fertilizer and insecticides and other higher production costs. Through 12 February 1973 prices increased 6.6 percent due largely to seasonal Tet increases.

(C) In addition, the government continued to run a budgetary deficit. Its expenditures were estimated at \$VN 365 billion for the year, an increase of \$VN 108 billion over 1971 expenditures. Military expenditures accounted for \$VN 210 billion of which \$VN 17 billion was directly related to the invasion, and civilian expenditures accounted for \$VN 155 billion, of which \$VN 9 billion was directly related to the invasion. Although domestic revenues continued to cover only a small portion of the total expenditures, new emphasis was placed on increasing such revenues. Domestic taxes collected by the Directorate General of Taxation amounted to \$VN 67.5 billion, and other domestic revenues totalled some \$VN 20 billion.

(C) Total expansionary influences such as South Vietnam and US expenditures and exports amounted to \$VN 520 billion in 1972, while contractionary factors such as imports, taxes, and bank deposits equalled \$VN 483 billion. This monetary gap of \$VN 37 billion was a 19 percent increase over last year's gap, a measure of the inflationary pressures caused by excessive public and private spending. On the other hand, expansion of the money supply fell to 12 percent for the year, compared to 20 percent for 1971. The sharp decline in demand for credits, in large measure invasion influenced, resulted in commercial bank credit falling by \$VN 5 billion in the the third and fourth quarters to a total level of \$VN 83 billion, while savings and time deposits increased by \$VN 38 billion to a level of \$VN 113 billion. The combined effect of these movements was to remove \$VN 43 billion from circulation during the second half of CY 72.

FOREIGN SECTOR

(C) In the foreign sector, the Republic of Vietnam had sustained an enormous trade deficit for nearly a decade. While imports increased to provide resources for sustaining real incomes, the traditional export base of rice and rubber had almost been erased. The large import level had been financed principally by the US aid program and piaster purchases. With the reduction of US presence, the South Vietnamese either would have to increase exports or suffer a large reduction of imports in order to avoid a serious balance of payments problem. During 1972 the balance of payments situation was reasonably favorable despite a sharp decline in piaster purchases by the US sector. The

purchases, affected both by the military withdrawal and the exchange rate changes, were \$US 229 million as compared to \$US 403 million in 1971. An extraordinarily high level of personal spending by servicemen remaining in-country (estimated at \$US 104 million during the year or \$100 per man per month) and a vigorous MACV program to stimulate local procurement of goods for the RVNAF (which were previously offshore) also helped to cushion the decline in US piaster purchases.

PROJECTED REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, 1972 (\$US Millions)*

Receipts		Expenditures	
Exports	23	Imports	247
Invisibles	89	AID Freight	26
Piaster Purchases	222	Invisibles	76
Miscellaneous	7		
TOTAL	332	TOTAL	349
Changes in Reserves (Receipts - Expenditures): -17			
Reserves, Year End			
(Gold and Foreign Exchange):			222

*Provisional estimates

Source: MACEA

Figure:D-1

(C) The slightness of the 1972 drop (\$US 17 million) in foreign exchange reserves was viewed as a major achievement in light of the severe fall in piaster purchases and was attributed to a reduced input level brought about by the recession, impressive gains in exports, which doubled, and a reduction in financial transfers linked mainly to the piaster depreciations. The doubling of exports to \$US 23 million occurred despite the loss of most of the year's rubber production as a result of the fighting in the rubber producing areas. Frozen shrimp and logs were leading export items, accounting for half of the total.

(C) US economic aid played a major role in maintaining a sufficient level of expenditures for non-defense purposes while there was an increasing allocation of resources to security requirements. Although the gross national product increased at a 3.8 percent rate per year over the decade, population increased at 2.8 percent per year, and government expenditures increased over 400 percent, a large portion of which was for defense. US foreign assistance came primarily from the following sources: US aid programs such as the Commercial Import Program (CIP), the Food for Peace Program (PL480), and project aid; DOD piaster purchases in the Republic of Vietnam; the Military Assistance Service Funded Program (MASF), which provided RVNAF with military materiel directly from the US services; and Third Country Aid.

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ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, CY 1971 and 1972
(\$US Millions)

	1971	1972
CIP Imports	268	286
PL480 Imports	81	182
Project Aid	90	72
DOD Expenditures	403	222
MAF	1,717	1,874
Total Commercial and Military Aid	2,559	2,586

Source: MACEA

Figure: D-2

AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

(C) Agricultural production was down during the year. This drop was most evident in the production of rice, where a combination of intensified hostilities and erratic rainfall during much of the

growing season dealt a substantial setback to prospects for self-sufficiency. Moreover, while there was a significant increase in rice production, the rice corp estimates of recent years were overstated. PL480 rice imports were some 285,000 metric tons and preliminary estimates for CY 73 indicate a requirement for 410,000 tons. In the fourth quarter, reserve stocks were less than one month's supply, and even that level was heavily dependent upon the timely arrival of scheduled imports and the uninterrupted flow of domestic rice from the Delta. These elements put a continued strain on rice prices during the year. Nevertheless, the situation was manageable, and the government had sufficient flexibility to arrange a short term loan of 10,000 metric tons of rice from its PL480 stocks when the Khmer Republic faced a severe rice crisis in September.

DOD SUPPORT PROGRAMS ³

(C) As a result of National Security Decision Memorandum 154 (NSDM 154) of 17 February 1972, which directed that US agencies provide \$US 650 million in foreign exchange support to South Vietnam, the Department of Defense (DOD) was required to increase its in-country spending by \$US 60 million during FY 73. To implement this program DOD tasked MACV on 2 March to analyze options and provide recommendations regarding which of the options could be employed to meet the goal.⁴ A comprehensive analysis of the possible options was completed by MACV and an interim report provided on 25 March.⁵

(C) On 2 May, the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) approved a program to convey the \$US 60 million. Termed the Vietnamese Economic Study (VES), it consisted of the following elements:⁶

OPTION	\$US MILLION
Additional In-Country Procurement (ICP) of Goods	13.0
Additional In-Country Procurement (ICP) of Services	9.0
MAF/Military Construction (MILCON)	8.1
Transfer of Assistance-In-Kind to O&M Funding	5.2
Direct budget support to the MOND budget	11.4
Transfer of scrap to the Government of Vietnam	13.3
TOTAL	60.0

Source: MACEA

Figure: D-3

(U) ICP of Goods: The in-country procurement of goods program was expanded to meet the NSDM 154 goals. Among the benefits of this program to

the Government of Vietnam economy were: source of foreign exchange, experience for the business community in quality content and specification standards of the world market, investments for future conversion to civil use, and utilization of idle industrial capacity.

(C) On 5 January 1972, the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Installations and Logistics) authorized the Commanding Officer, US Army Procurement Agency, Vietnam (USAPAV) to procure MAF items from Vietnamese contractors at a premium of 25 percent above US delivered prices (US price + transportation). MACV had requested such authority as part of the Vietnam Developmental Procurement Program (VDPP) submitted in late CY 71. Subsequently, purchase requests for dehydrated rice, dry cell batteries, chambray and denim cloth, uniforms, and field jackets were advertised for bid, and contracts totalling \$US 1.39 million were awarded to Vietnamese contractors prior to June 30. Purchase requests for over \$US 31 million were submitted to competitive bid and by mid-February 1973 contract awards for such items as dehydrated rice, canned goods, paint, barbed wire, sandbags, and reinforcement bars totalled over \$US 20.1 million. In addition, MACV estimated that a significant potential existed for additional purchases of dehydrated rice, batteries, pharmaceuticals and textiles.

(C) ICP of Services: In order that an additional \$US 9.0 million in service contracts called for in the Vietnamese Economic Study (VES) could be awarded, OASD (I&L) authorized the USAPAV to award contracts to Vietnamese firms at prices up to 25 percent above those previously paid non-Viet-

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namese firms for the same or similar services. The authority was interpreted to allow the restriction of solicitations to Vietnamese sources provided a local capability existed. By mid-February contracts totalling \$US 7.5 million had been awarded to local firms for such services as maintenance of facilities, stevedoring, utilities, and aircraft maintenance. Because of the cease-fire this represented the maximum level of contracts that would be awarded for services.

(C) MASF/MILCON: The VES provided for an additional \$US 8.1 million to be conveyed via MILCON projects in support of the RVNAF. MACV identified projects already under design or in the planning stages, with an estimated contract value of \$US 14.8 million, to satisfy this requirement. By mid-February ten projects conveying approximately \$US 4.4 million had been approved and one contract conveying \$US .023 million had been awarded. Additionally, three contracts for the Delta Rock Agency were awarded in early January 1973. Totalling \$US 1.06 million, the contracts were for rock and rock transportation.

(C) Transfer of Association-in-Kind (AIK) to Operations and Maintenance (O&M): The original goal of \$US 5.2 million was reduced to \$US 4.8 million in order to permit continued AIK support of Korean forces. Additionally, the CY 72 Vietnamese

supplemental budget request was reduced by \$US 4.8 million, thus maximizing the economic benefit of the program. By mid-February, about \$US 3.6 million in funded AIK program had been converted to O&M.

(C) Direct Budget Support: MACV identified line items procured by the RVNAF Purchasing and Contracting Department (PCD) and with assistance of the Vietnamese designed procedures for carrying out the program. At year end implementation of these procedures had not been directed by DOD. In late January 1973, however, DOD directed that direct budget support not be implemented.

(C) Scrap Transfer: The VES called for the transfer of \$US 13.3 million in scrap from the US Army Property Disposal Agency, Vietnam (USAPDAV) to the Government of Vietnam for support of the MOND budget. Subsequently, the Prime Minister tasked the Central Logistics Agency (CLA) with responsibility for handling the disposal operation. A country-to-country agreement was signed on 14 December 1972.⁷ USAPDAV estimated that over 80,000 short tons of scrap would be transferred by the end of June 1973, with new generation estimated to be 5,000 short tons per month. Unrecovered scrap ammunition brass located throughout the country was included in the scrap to be transferred.

MILITARY-ECONOMIC INTERRELATIONSHIPS

(U) MACV advisory efforts to the Ministry of National Defense (MOND) and the Joint General Staff (JGS) relating to the economic interface between the military and civil economic sectors increased during 1972 with a number of significant policy decisions promulgated.

NONPARTICIPATION BY THE MILITARY IN COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES

(U) The decision by the South Vietnamese Cabinet on 28 March 1972 that the military would not participate in commercial activities led to the formation of a joint RVNAF/MACV committee on 4 May 1972 to draft a MOND directive constraining these activities. Both the Vietnamese Government and the US Mission were concerned because the RVNAF was participating in a number of business activities such as the Soldiers' Mutual Aid and Savings Fund which had the potential for making an adverse impact on the growth of private enterprise in the Republic of Vietnam. After a series of meetings by this committee, a MOND directive to the JGS was issued on 24 August 1972.⁸

(U) This directive affirmed the principle that the RVNAF's manpower, material, and financial re-

sources were to be used for military purposes only. Commercial activities such as the trading, industrial production, transportation, or storage of goods for profit were strictly prohibited unless authorized by competent officials. In addition, the RVNAF was required to support national economic development efforts through maximum procurement of local products through open bids; suspension of efforts to produce commodities which private enterprises are capable of providing; and prohibition of the use of RVNAF facilities for commercial purposes.

RVNAF COMMISSARY SYSTEM

(U) A joint RVNAF/MACV committee was established in February 1972 to develop a RVNAF Commissary/Exchange Department Operating Policy Statement (1972-1976).⁹ The draft statement was completed on 28 February 1972 and was subsequently coordinated with the JGS/MOND and the US Mission. This statement delineated pricing policies, patron eligibility, scope of operations, and management and control procedures. After review and extensive coordination, the statement was issued by the MOND as a directive to the JGS on 25 October 1972. Since the RVNAF Commissary/Ex-

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change Department was the largest business in Vietnam with approximately one-fourth of the Vietnamese people either authorized patrons or dependents, its economic impact was considerable. MACV expected that the statement would assist the Commissary/Exchange Department in fulfilling an important role in economic development.

RVNAF FARM PROGRAM

(U) RVNAF farms were established on a centralized management basis in 1968 to provide supplemental foods to servicemen and their dependents and to provide vocational training. The scope of the farm program and its potential impact on private sector agricultural development elicited unfavorable comment from the US Mission, which believed that the domestic marketing system would be enhanced if the military established procurement standards for the local markets and assisted in the development of these markets. Two events in particular stimulated an in-depth examination of this program. The 28 March 1972 decision of the Vietnamese Cabinet that the military should not participate in business activities established the principle that large scale, centrally managed farming activities were inappropriate. Further, the NVA invasion of 1972 brought a realization that military manpower should be used to accomplish military objectives rather than to farm.

(U) After the Combined Committee on RVNAF Participation in Business Enterprises suggested that these activities could be eliminated, MOND decreed that liquidation be completed not later than 31 December 1972. Although plans and actions were in progress toward meeting this target, technical problems involved in auctioning some of the properties required the final termination date to be postponed to 31 March 1973.¹²

COMBINED COMMITTEE ON RVNAF PAY IMPROVEMENTS

(U) In May 1972 a Combined Committee on RVNAF Pay Improvements was suggested by the Minister of National Defense and concurred with by COMUSMACV in June 1972, for the purpose of developing a comprehensive pay proposal to assure constant purchasing power for the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) by periodic pay increases. The Combined Committee as formed included representatives from the MOND, the JGS, and MACV.¹³

(U) Since the Government of Vietnam could not secure sufficient funds to restore full purchasing power, the problem was to determine just how much was available for an RVNAF pay increase, and then how it should be distributed. Once it was decided that \$VN 10.5 billion was available, the

Committee felt that the best means of distributing the funds would be through a percentage increase in base pay rather than a lump sum increase for all personnel as had been done in the past. A percentage increase distributes the funds proportionally to responsibility thereby increasing the incentive for promotion. The first interim report was submitted to the Minister of National Defense.¹⁴

(U) The Committee also recommended that a National Salary Pay Board be established to review and adjust military and civil service pay annually to insure that the standard of living keeps pace with economic growth.

(U) On 11 September 1972 the Prime Minister, Republic of Vietnam, issued a decree prepared on the basis of the Committee's recommendation for a 52 percent increase in base pay to bolster performance and motivation incentives.¹⁵ This increase, effective 1 September 1972, raised RVNAF pay approximately \$VN 20 billion annually.

(U) Phase II of the Committee's work involved investigating various means of improving and simplifying the RVNAF Pay and Allowances System to make it logical, comprehensive, and equitable, and to help promote professionalism within the RVNAF. On 23 November the second interim report was submitted with a number of recommendations which were designed to accomplish the Committee's goals. Among the important recommendations were revision of the regular and Territorial Force base pay schedule, to include member component of the cost of living allowance in base pay at the low cost of living rate, and making promotion increases equal to or greater than longevity increases. In addition, dependents' allowances were consolidated to incorporate the various allowances into a simple payment schedule. Finally, it was recommended that the dependents' allowances be paid for a maximum of four children for each soldier effective 1 January 1975.¹⁴

(U) The third and final task of the Committee was to investigate in kind rations and the retirement system. After a study of how the soldier in garrison was fed the Committee recommended that the Republic of Vietnam discontinue the rice allowance and replace it with a money allowance adjusted quarterly to prevent erosion of the allowance by inflation. Further, it was recommended that the types of ration allowances be simplified and that the fresh food ration allowance be increased to more adequately meet the nutritional needs of the soldier. In its recommendations for a revised retirement pay system, the committee felt that the bonus annuity system was a disincentive for a professional army and too expensive; in its place a graduated retirement system was recommended which would reward longer service with proportion-

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ally greater retired pay. In addition, the recommendation was made to allow reserve and regular personnel to retire under the same rules. On 16 February GEN Weyand concurred with the recommendations of Phase III and the MOND drafted a decree to implement the recommendations. Signing of the decree was expected in March 1973.

(U) In September 1972 a combined MOND/JGS/MACV committee was constituted in response to a request by the Minister of National Defense. MACEA was given MACV staff responsibility. The combined committee was tasked with establishment of a National Defense Planning System (NDPS), development of planning guidance for the MOND Four Year Plan (MFYP), and design of a Program Management System. It held its first meeting on 6 October 1972.

(U) During October, the committee held several full sessions, initially to review and evaluate present national defense planning and budgeting procedures and documents. By late October the combined committee had developed a methodology for accomplishing its assigned tasks. The committee established a set of specific desirable improvements, including: development of a comprehensive four year plan and annual planning update cycle; selection of military goals, strategy and force structure design; and development of specific MOND/JGS military, management, and developmental objectives and programs for relating plans to budgets. These improvements included adoption of characteristics of the US planning, programming, and budgeting system (PPBS), particularly the comprehensive PPBS cycle, expanded comptroller organizations, the addition of programming capabilities, and a complete output oriented program budget structure and fiscal code.

(U) By November the committee had broken into smaller working subcommittees to design the NDPS PPBS cycle, the initial MFYP, and a CY 74 program budget. In December the committee finalized its report which by the end of the month had been staffed through the major MACV staff agencies preparatory to presentation to COMUSMACV. MOND and JGS staffing and presentation to the Prime Minister occurred during January 1973.¹⁵

(U) Although this report was originally intended to be an interim report, the combined committee was dissolved with its publication. NDPS and MFYP activity continued under MOND and JGS supervision with active advice and monitoring by US agencies.

MILITARY MANPOWER

(U) During the year military manpower issues became a major focus of MACEA efforts. The activities and reports of the MACV Demobilization

Study Committee, the MACV Mobilization Study Committee, the Combined MOND/MACV Manpower Mobilization Committee, and the MACV Mid-range Forces Structure Committee reflect this new focus.

(U) The MACV Demobilization Study Committee was organized at the direction of COMUSMACV on 5 March 1972 to develop alternative RVNAF demobilization concepts in outline form; analyze economic implications including employment, price stabilization, fiscal policy, and supporting assistance; and identify specific areas for further planning. The Committee, chaired by MACEA, included representatives from MACDP, MACDO, MACCORDS, AAG, and MACCO.

(U) The need for such a study was prompted because demobilization involved complex issues with potentially significant impact on national security, political cohesion, and economic stability as well as development opportunities. Important considerations included fiscal constraints, ability to implement effective programs when the need arose, utilization of human resources to foster economic development, and the need to assure servicemen, veterans, and dependents that the Government of Vietnam could phase into a prosperous peace in an orderly fashion with a minimum of personal hardship.

(U) The final report was approved by COMUSMACV on 11 July 1972. An abbreviated version of the study was approved by the US Embassy on 17 August 1972 and forwarded by MACV to JGS on 25 August 1972.¹⁶

(U) MACV Mobilization Study Committee: On 30 May the Ambassador requested that a committee be formed with MACV, USAID, and US Embassy representatives to get the relevant information and to address issues concerning mobilization, student deferments, and the status of universities. The following day COMUSMACV indicated that the study should include information concerning manpower requirements, procurement, distribution, and training capabilities. On 7 June COMUSMACV was briefed on the final study.¹⁷

(U) The study concluded that:

—There was an adequate manpower and training base for Vietnam's military manpower requirements.

—A new, comprehensive mobilization law was needed.

—Major changes in higher education policies and student deferments were required.

—Increased efforts were necessary to insure that draft criteria and mobilization quotas were strictly and impartially enforced.

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(U) In August in response to recommendations by the MACV Mobilization Study Committee, a Combined MOND/MACV Manpower Mobilization Committee Directive established a MOND/MACV Manpower Mobilization Committee for the primary purpose of developing a new mobilization law. The Combined Committee held its first meeting on 7 September. On 13 October the entire committee was briefed in the final proposed law, and on 21 December the law was promulgated by the President of Vietnam.¹²

(U) The mobilization law, although it established the service obligation for all males of the Republic, pertained specifically to those brought into the service by conscription and replaced the several laws and decrees then in effect which had restricted applicability. Further, it rationalized the service obligation to include definition of mobilization status, and provided for terms of service, a reserve force, and realistic draft age vulnerability, as well as restructured deferment categories to meet mobilization status.

(U) However, the task of studying demobilization, included in the directive establishing the committee, had not been addressed and the personnel management aspects of a release from service program for all servicemen remained to be studied. Therefore, the committee continued to meet to study these subjects. The plan was for the study to be completed by the end of February 1973, at which time it would be staffed through other Vietnamese ministries.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE RVNAF MIDRANGE FORCE STRUCTURE STUDY¹³

(U) By the end of July after eight months' experience with the MACV/JGS RVNAF Force Structure Review for 1973, it became clear that the MOND and JGS lacked plans for demobilization, lacked a rationalization of the mobilized force structure, and lacked an adequate appreciation of the effects of RVNAF force levels and MOND budget costs on the national budget (necessitating deletion or cutback of many desirable programs). Partially in consequence of MACV perception of these problems, a MACV study group was created to devise an optimal RVNAF force level and structure for the FY 74-78 period which would deal adequately with the threat by balancing military requirements against other national resources needs, allowing modest economic development objectives to be met. At the least, it was realized that real per capita output must increase slightly over the period. MACEA performed a detailed economic analysis of twelve scenarios, each involving a hypothetical trace of force levels and composition through time, with appropriate national expenditures and US aid inputs. Economic effects for each scenario were gauged and compared. It was concluded that a significant reduction in RVNAF strength was needed to assist in maintaining the Republic's solvency and national economic viability, and that the creation of a ready reserve of citizen-soldiers would give a rapid response capability in meeting renewed hostilities, at a much lower budget cost.

OTHER MACEA ACTIVITIES

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

(U) The efforts of the Joint MACV/USAID/GVN Committee for the Development of the Industry of Construction (CDIC) begun in April 1971 bore fruition during the first six months of 1972. Three fully operational industrial sites (Da Nang, Sumpco, and Binh Thuy) were transferred to the Vietnam Engineering and Construction Company (VECCO). In addition, following extensive study and coordination, a CDIC developed plan for transfer and use of the Saigon Island Depot facility was approved by the Vietnamese Cabinet, COMUSMACV, and the Director, USAID. The northern portion, consisting of maintenance and rebuild shops, a power plant, repair parts, a storage area, and headquarters building, was transferred to VECCO. VECCO also received over 1,000 pieces of equipment ancillary to the industrial sites and Saigon Island as well as 850 pieces of major construction equipment for an equipment rental pool.

MONITORING THE VIETNAMESE ECONOMY

(U) Taxation: MACEA monitored South Vietnam's efforts to increase domestic tax revenues and stimulated efforts on the part of the US Mission and the Ministry of Finance to conduct a major overhaul of the domestic tax program. A study of existing and proposed taxes and a consideration of their current and future potential in increasing domestic revenues was prepared by MACEA and used by the US Embassy and USAID in advising the Ministries of Finance, Economy, and Interior on tax improvement. The continuing monitorship of present and proposed tax measures by MACEA economists served to keep OSD informed on this subject and assisted in the vitalization of Government of Vietnam measures to increase the tax base, improve collection efficiency, reduce corruption and tax evasion, and increase the yield of the total tax package. Partly as a result of these efforts, tax revenues for 1972 were 37 percent greater than in 1971. Most

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significant was the passage under Presidential Emergency Powers of six new decree laws; revised income tax, rural and urban property tax, vehicle circulation tax, business license tax, registration tax, and value-added tax, all promulgated in the fourth quarter. The Minister of Finance modified excise tax regulations to place all excises on an ad valorem basis. The foregoing taxes, together with strengthened enforcement, planned increases in staffing, and improved tax census would assist the Republic of Vietnam to reach the 1975 goal of financing 50 percent of government expenditures from domestic tax revenues.

GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM AND MOND BUDGET

(C) MACEA monitored the Republic and Ministry of Defense budget growth, allocation, and deficit on a continuing basis, for the following purposes: to inform SECDEF and COMUSMACV of significant trends; to influence the Budget Screening Board's deliberations on use of counter-part funds for budget support; to evaluate the implications and effects of defense expenditures on Government of Vietnam resource availabilities and the Vietnamese economy; and to advise the Government of Vietnam on financial control, cost reduction, and economic stabilization. In the longer range, program budget and control techniques of the Vietnamese Defense Planning System and the demobilization and reserve force planning efforts were expected to assist in future budget reductions.

PROJECTED FOREIGN AID

(U) In May and June of 1972 MACEA officers participated in preparing long range projection of the growth of the Vietnamese economy. These projections, prepared for use in the FY74 USAID Country Field Submission, were designed to measure the

foreign exchange requirements and the performance of other parameters in the economy and were based on a macroeconomic model of the Vietnamese economy designed by MACEA.²⁰

(U) Critical to the success of DOD's in-country procurement program and to the longer term economic development in Vietnam was an efficient monetary system. Consequently, MACEA undertook an extensive analysis of Vietnam's monetary system and made recommendations to streamline banking regulations, to channel credit to productive sectors of the economy, and to effect a more favorable balance of payments environment. These proposed reforms provided a government working committee with the initial basis for discussions concerning Republic of Vietnam monetary reforms.

DREYFUS REPORT

(U) In order that the US Army might contribute to the university level educational system in South Vietnam, Dr. Lee S. Dreyfus, President of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point, accompanied the Secretary of the Army on his trip to Vietnam in January. During his visit he was briefed by MACV, USAID, and South Vietnamese officials. In addition, he met with university officials throughout the country and toured US military facilities considered suitable for transfer to educational institutions. Following his visit a joint MACV/USARV/USAID ad hoc committee on higher education was established to study and implement, where feasible, the recommendations made by Dr. Dreyfus following his visit. Subsequently, over \$US 1 million in excess military equipment was transferred to institutions such as the Vietnamese Agricultural Center at Thu Duc, the National Technical Center in Saigon, and the Universities of Saigon, Hue, and Can Tho. In addition, a US facility, Comp Doezema, was transferred to the University of Hue.

SUMMARY

(U) As the year ended the Vietnamese economy had survived the initial effects of the NVA invasion. Its resilience under the impact of this blow indicated the strength of the basic economy despite continuing recession, considerable inflation, and the uncertainties of the cease-fire. Reducing reliance on US aid and the demands of economic development remained its major challenges. Vietnamization of the economy had taken great strides since MACEA joined the economic community in late 1970. Tax, investment, exchange rate, and other reforms were implemented. The military learned to consider the economic and financial consequences of its policies and was desisting in its competition with

the private business sector. DOD programs aided in stabilizing and developing the economy, and the US drawdown progressed without economic crisis or unacceptable labor dislocation. With the drawdown of US military presence MACEA not only continued to monitor and advise on the impact of military actions on the Vietnamese economy, but also worked towards transferring its functions to other agencies of the Republic in continuance of the US Vietnamization policy.

(U) With the signing of a cease-fire the functions of MACEA were transferred to the Plans and Coordination Office of the Defense Attache Office and MACEA ceased operations on 18 February 1973.

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COMMUNITY DEFENSE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

(U) As the American troop withdrawal continued throughout 1972, the Government of Vietnam moved toward greater self-sufficiency in military strength, political stability, and social and economic development. Security in Vietnam improved; the government assumed an increased share of the security and development roles that they had formerly shared with the United States. Decreasing American manpower levels encouraged this movement. Each year since 1969 the Vietnamese had increased their contribution to the preparation of the annual Community Defense and Local Development Plan. By 1971 the plan shifted the major emphasis from security operations to assisting and improving political and economic development. Although security remained an important part of the pacification effort, progress in this area permitted the change of focus.²¹

(U) The execution of the 1971 plan created a foundation for further progress in pacification. A major step in long term planning was achieved with the creation of the first comprehensive multi-year plan for development, the Four Year Community Defense and Local Development Plan (CDLD) for the years 1972 through 1975. The plan was designed to create conditions under which a real and lasting peace could be achieved, with freedom and prosperity for all people. Aimed at consolidating secure areas and promoting local development in order to effectively support national economic progress during the four years of the plan, it addressed three areas of action which reflected the three objectives of the program: local self-defense, local self-government, and local self-development.

(U) The purpose of local self-defense was to consolidate secure areas and to extend security and prosperity to additional areas. The Government of Vietnam realized that whether the Vietnam war ended by negotiation or died down gradually, the national defense effort needed to insure territorial security and prevent renewed Communist aggression. The national defense program, including force level planning, had to take into account the war situation and national capabilities. The country needed to maintain sufficient strength to fulfill national defense requirements, but this strength had to be maintained on the basis of a citizen army to alleviate the national budget burden. The plan envisioned the continuous improvement of territorial security by totally eliminating the enemy secret zones and bases; breaking up all enemy main force units, regional units, and guerrilla units; and eliminating the Viet Cong infrastructure in the territory of the Republic of Vietnam.

(U) The objective of local self-government called

for strengthening the existing constitutional structures, especially basic local government institutions, and improving local administration. Constitutional institutions from national to local levels were to be improved in order to encourage those citizens having a sense of responsibility, a belief in democracy, and a good educational background to run for election or to accept appointments to government agencies. The Government of Vietnam sought to develop in every citizen a sense of responsibility and respect for the law, as well as a sense of democracy, in order to create a sound democracy in South Vietnam and at the same time to develop stability and promote prosperity. Administrative procedures were to be simplified as much as possible, and the moral and intellectual qualities of government cadre were to be emphasized. The national government also desired that a sense of political democracy and an anticommunist spirit be developed among the people so that they might conduct an effective political struggle against the Communists. The Saigon administration also warned of the need to develop greater national unity against the Communists by concentrating the will and actions of the people at all levels for the purpose of attaining national security and economic development.

(U) Through local self-development, the Republic of Vietnam sought to assure prosperity for all by developing the local economy, gradually reducing dependence on foreign aid, and advancing toward self-sufficiency. The plan noted that adequate security and a guarantee to adhere strictly to all trade contracts and economic agreements would inspire the confidence of foreign businessmen and encourage them to increase their investments in the Republic of Vietnam. Moreover, under the plan foreign and domestic investment would be encouraged. The ratio of public investment to public expenditures would be increased to 15 percent by the last year of the plan in 1975. The government also planned for the gross national product to increase by six percent in each of the first three years of the plan, 1972 to 1974, and by seven percent in the last year, 1975. The real income of each citizen was planned to increase by three percent in each of the first three years and by four percent in the fourth year. Exports were to be developed in order to increase earnings of foreign exchange while minimizing the deficit in the balance of trade. The plan called for the development of agricultural and industrial enterprises to increase exports and products for competition with foreign goods. At the same time, an equitable tax structure would be established to satisfy domestic needs. Tax re-

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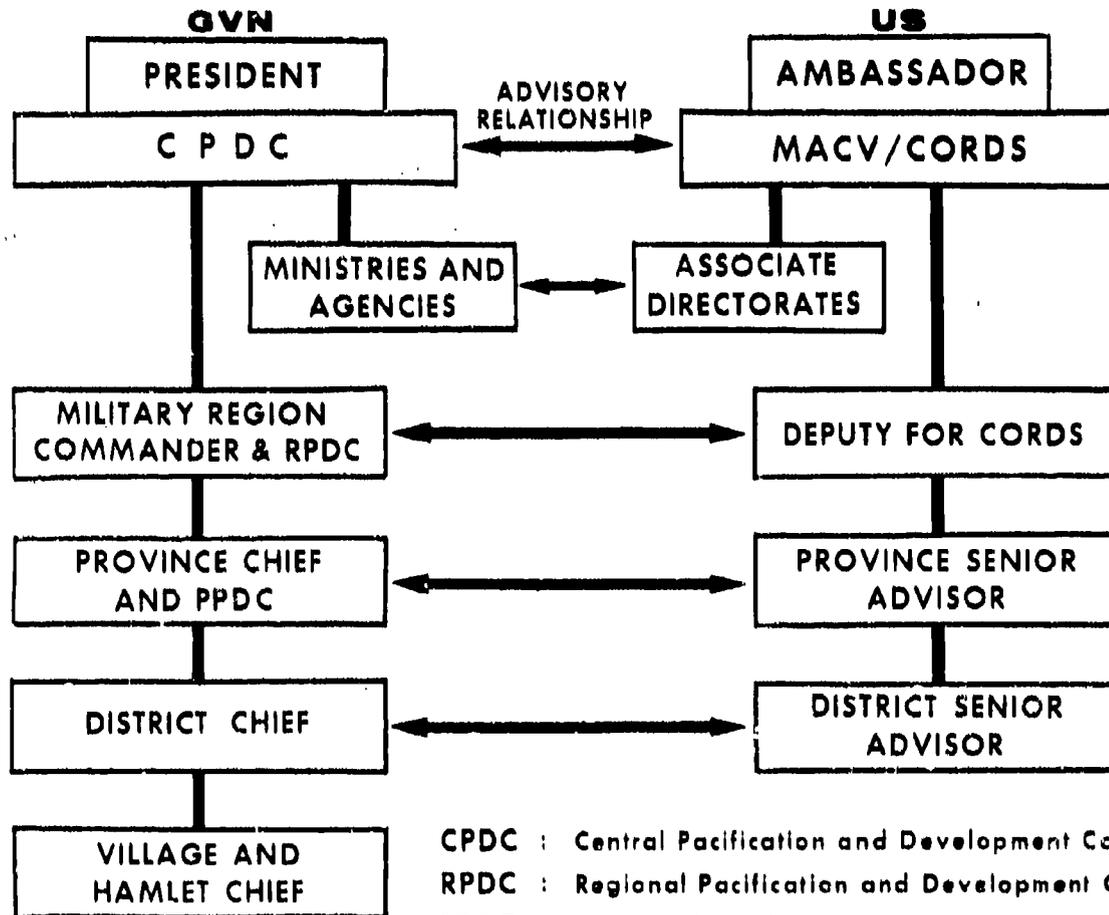
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venues were to be increased by striving to ensure that all citizens made fair contributions. This would enable local government to obtain enough resources to carry out all of its developmental programs. The domestic tax rate was scheduled to rise from 12.5 percent of the gross national product of 1970 to 25 percent in 1975. Price increases were to be held to about ten percent each year.²¹

(U) The Government of Vietnam set up a special organizational structure (Fig. D-4) to tackle this ambitious program. At the highest level of national administration was the Central Pacification and

Development Council (CPDC), having the ultimate responsibility for the implementation of the four year plan. The President of the Republic was the chairman of this council and provided leadership and guidance for the governmental ministries and agencies involved. The regional and provincial Pacification and Development Councils provided local officials with an expeditious means of bringing their problems to the attention of the President and the Prime Minister, if these could not be solved by the lower councils themselves. Despite the enemy spring offensive, as 1972 wore on an increasing

ORGANIZATION FOR COMMUNITY DEFENSE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT



CPDC : Central Pacification and Development Council
RPDC : Regional Pacification and Development Council
PPDC : Provincial Pacification and Development Council

SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-4

D-11

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number of problems were solved at a lower level by coordination and cooperation between the provincial administrations and the Province Pacification and Development Councils.

(U) To advise and assist this Government of Vietnam structure, the United States Mission developed a parallel advisory organization in which MACV's Office of Civil Operations and Rural Development (CORDS) was deeply involved. The CORDS advisory effort focused on all levels of the organization for implementing the plan. At the national level other MACV directorates were involved; the MACV Deputy Chief of Staff for Economic Affairs (MACEA) was responsible for advising governmental ministries and other agencies on economic development, MACEA was primarily concerned with macroeconomic matters while CORDS concentrated on local development both political and economic.

(U) In 1965 the advisory effort had been shared by MACV and several American civil agencies. The primary civil agencies were the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO). During the mid-1960s a lack of coordination among these agencies resulted in conflicting advice and ineffective use of resources, particularly at the province level. In November 1966 all the field elements of the civil agencies were brought under a single system of management, the Office of Civil Operations (OCO). Subsequently, President Johnson directed the formation of COROS in 1967, unifying the field advisory elements of American civil and military agencies in Vietnam. USAID, JUSPAO, and the MACV advisory elements, however, maintained their separate identities and separate staffs

in Saigon for dealing with the ministries of the Government of Vietnam on policy matters. Because both Americans and Vietnamese realized that military security was the stepping stone toward further economic and social development, the responsibility for CORDS operations was placed under the United States military commander. On 30 June 1972 JUSPAO was dissolved and replaced by a United States Information Service office in the US Mission. This entailed the termination of public affairs advisory functions to the Government of Vietnam and the withdrawal of United States Information Agency (USIA) personnel from CORDS. The Information Service maintained a presence in the four military regions, however, to carry out normal USIA functions, and CORDS advisory teams used their technical advice and resources for the support of pacification objectives.

(U) At the national level CORDS and USAID maintained a close relationship as partners in the American effort. USAID provided the technical advice and guidance to the national government for long range programs, particularly in the area of development. The CORDS advisory effort focused on community oriented programs designed for implementation at the province and municipal level.

(U) Building upon the success of previous pacification plans, the Government of Vietnam began efforts in 1971 to obtain the participation of the people in local self-defense, self-government, and self-development. These three objectives were the main thrust of the 1972-1975 four year plan. This plan continued the emphasis on local affairs and self-help and stressed political, social, and economic efforts to consolidate government control and support.²³

OVERVIEW

LOCAL SELF-DEFENSE

(U) The first objective of the four year plan, local self-defense, was to consolidate secure areas and to bring currently contested areas under government control. Units operating sporadically in non-secure areas failed to provide meaningful security; the units had to remain in the area, building operating bases if necessary, and providing protection day and night.

(U) This required a heavy commitment of regular troops, consequently hampering the war effort against enemy main force units. Therefore, the first element of local self-defense, territorial security, was provided at the province and lower levels by the Regional Forces and Popular Forces. Regional Forces, operating primarily in company size units, conducted offensive operations against the enemy. Their mission was to keep the enemy as far as

possible from populated areas through the use of offensive tactics against enemy bases and by counter-guerrilla maneuvers to prevent enemy infiltration. Popular Force soldiers, operating in platoon size units, provided an active defense force to protect the people from the enemy. They provided security for villages and hamlets, protected lines of communication and important installations, collected intelligence information, and trained the People's Self-Defense Force. The Regional and Popular Forces numbered over 500,000 soldiers in 1972, more than half of the total military strength of the Republic of Vietnam.²⁴

People's Self-Defense Force

(U) After the Viet Cong attacks of Tet 1968, thousands of Vietnamese citizens requested that the government provide them with firearms so that they

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could form their own self-defense groups. To enable the local people to protect themselves from enemy activities, the national administration established the People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF) in late 1968. Since that time over 600,000 weapons had been issued to the PSDF. Through extensive training, these unpaid civilians developed into an effective deterrent to enemy activity directed at hamlets.

(U) The PSDF was more than a defensive force. It was divided into two branches, combat and support. The support branch was the larger and was composed of women, youths, and elders who worked with the combat members on local self-development projects, as well as assisting them in defense. Basically under the control of the village chiefs, the PSDF was a mass organization at the village and hamlet level with over four million active

participants. Because it was a people's organization, the PSDF had a cohesive influence in the local community.

(U) Even though the PSDF program was successful, some problems remained to be solved. One problem was a weakness in the area of military skills. To alleviate this, the government planned intensified training of the combat PSDF. Another problem common to all the South Vietnamese armed forces and shared by the PSDF was motivation. To solve this, plans were made to recognize achievement and to provide political education. Weakness in the area of leadership was addressed by planning comprehensive training of team leaders.

(U) The Government of Vietnam had long recognized that expansion of area security depended on the efficient use of the forces that were available.



People's Self-Defense Forces, unpaid and composed of youth, over-draft-age men and females of all ages, were organized to insure the defense of villages and hamlets.

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National Police deployed at village level contributed to local defense. A member of the People's Self-Defense Force of Truong Khanh village in Ba Xuyen Province pauses to discuss defense plans with a National Policeman.

To assist in reaching the goals of the four year plan in this area, territorial security objectives were assigned. The first extended security into areas that were only partially controlled; the second provided security for resettlement of valuable land areas that had been given up in the past; and the last objective established control of land and lines of communication linking the areas mentioned above with other land areas. This was necessary to the progress of pacification.²⁰

National Police

(U) In addition to the Territorial Forces and the PSDF, the government had available the primary law enforcement agency in Vietnam, the National Police (NP), numbering approximately 120,000. The NP accomplished a directed and progressive extension of police responsibility for local security in conjunction with Territorial Forces. Approximately 30,000 policemen were deployed at the village level. NP stations were to be completed in all secure

villages in which a census had been completed by the Ministry of Information, by the end of 1972. However, completion of this goal in Military Region 1 was impossible due to the security situation following the NGUYEN HUE Offensive.

(U) As the police gradually assumed additional responsibility for local security with the Territorial Forces, increased emphasis was placed on urban and rural patrolling with the assistance of the PSDF and the Field Police. The provision in Decree Law 120 stipulating that village police station chiefs were to serve concurrently as deputy village chiefs for security was implemented countrywide. Initial reports from the field indicated no serious problems. The civil law enforcement role of the NP was concentrated against subversive activities and social evils, with specific emphasis on narcotics. A significant improvement in the quality and scope of training and in recruiting standards was planned to enhance the professional image and overall quality of policemen. New training courses were

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planned to provide introduction to management systems, with particular emphasis on middle level management and leadership training.

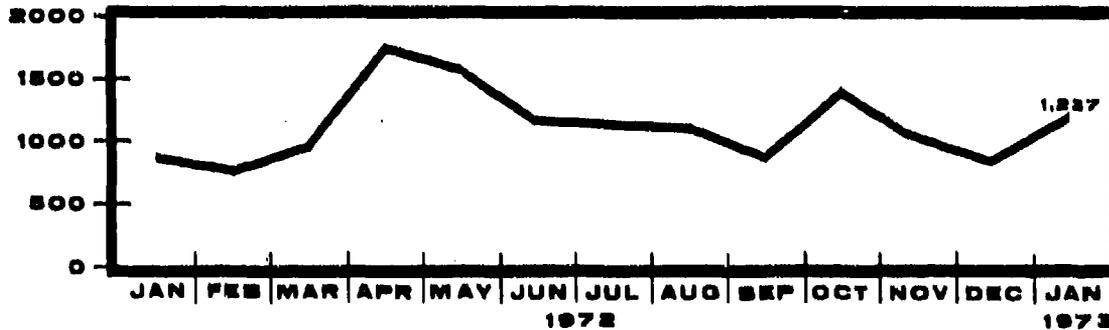
(U) The National Police was the key force in neutralizing the Viet Cong infrastructure. A major tactic of this infrastructure was terrorism; the Communist cadre killed, wounded, and abducted tens of thousands of Vietnamese civilians during the course of the war. Figure D-6 provides a monthly record of the number of incidents and people victimized by the deliberate terrorist activities of the Viet Cong. Figure D-6, grouping the victims into categories, depicts the Viet Cong emphasis on terror to counter the development programs of the Government of Vietnam. Many of the victims were local village or hamlet officials,

as well as doctors, teachers, religious leaders, and technicians, demonstrating the determination of the Viet Cong to halt the political, social, and economic progress of the South Vietnamese Government. Government cadre were also commonly targeted because they presented a challenge to the Viet Cong organization at the local level.

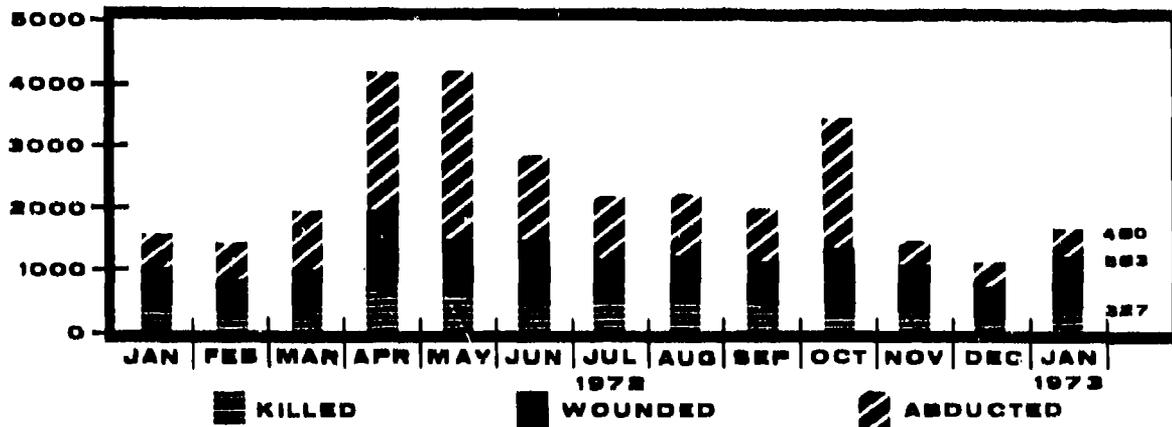
(U) To protect the people from this criminal terrorism controlled by the Viet Cong infrastructure, a high priority was given to the Phung Hoang Program. The mission of this program was to build confirmed cases against known enemy infrastructure members, capture them, and then sentence them (Fig. D-7). This was accomplished by Phung Hoang intelligence and operations centers in which the South Vietnamese regular army,

TERRORISM 1972/73

INCIDENTS



VICTIMS



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-5

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Territorial Forces, National Police, and other agencies were represented. These centers were established in every province, district, and autonomous city in the country. The Phung Hoang operation was renamed Protection of the People against Terrorism (POPAT), and became the responsibility of the National Police. Neutralizations included both Viet Cong infrastructure members who rallied to the Government of Vietnam of their own free will and those who were captured or killed as a result of military or police operations. Under the

four year plan, emphasis shifted to the achievement of qualitative neutralization goals. The plan called for infrastructure members to be listed by name at the beginning of each quarter and specifically targeted for neutralization during that period.³⁰

The Chieu Hoi Program

(U) The Chieu Hoi program was another approach to weakening the ranks of the enemy, but without bloodshed or criminal proceedings. This program permitted former enemy cadre to volun-

TERRORIST VICTIMS

STATISTICAL SUMMARY

1 JAN 68 TO 31 JAN 73



<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>
● PROVINCE AND DISTRICT OFFICIALS	36	43
● VILLAGE AND HAMLET OFFICIALS	1,890	1,073
● GVN CIVIL FORCES AND CADRE (National Police, RD Cadre, PSDF)	3,429	8,150
● ORDINARY CITIZENS	21,920	53,159
● TOTAL	27,275	62,425

SOURCE: MACCORDS

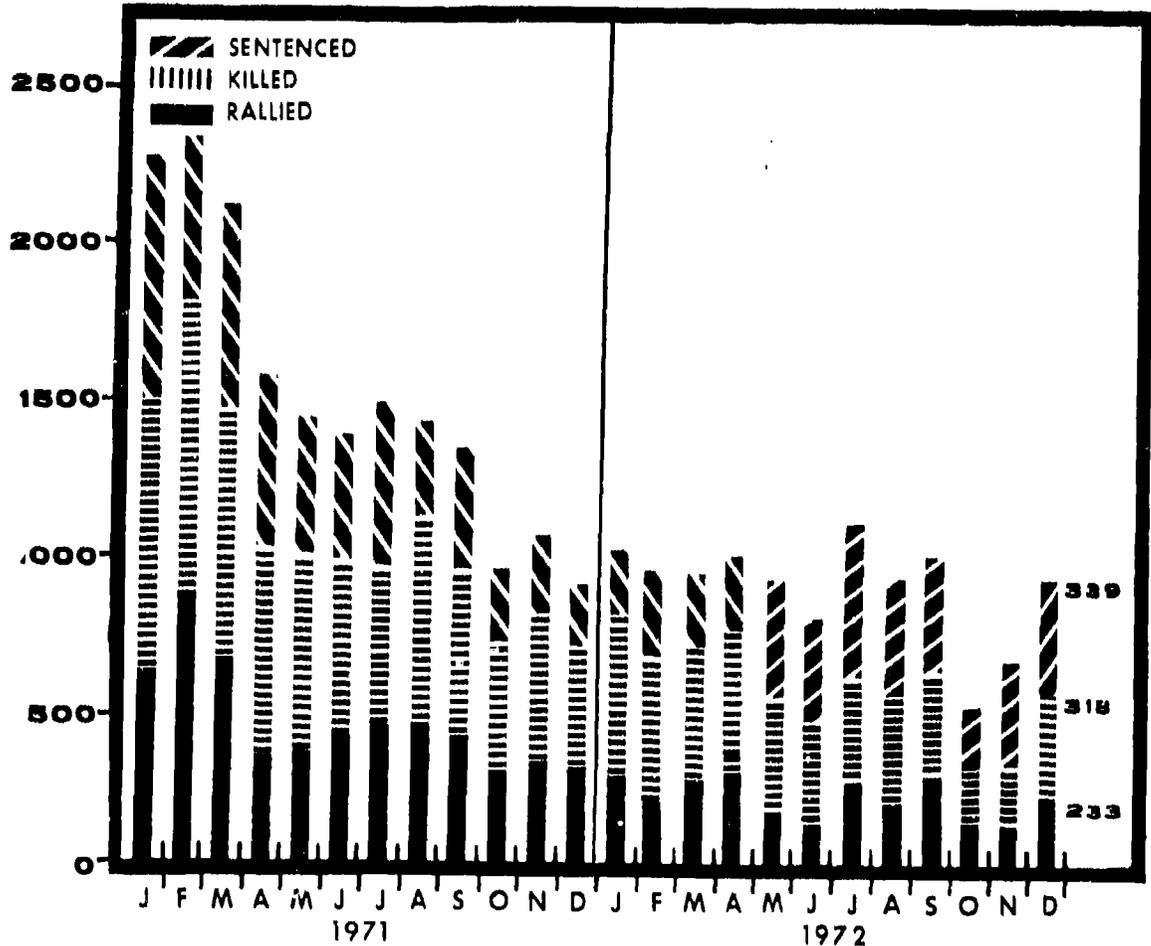
Figure: D-6

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PROTECTION FROM TERRORISM

NEUTRALIZATION OF INDIVIDUAL VCI CADRE

OF VCI CADRE NEUTRALIZED



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-7

tarily surrender to the Government of Vietnam in exchange for full amnesty and a chance to return to a productive life, usually in their home village (Fig. D-8). The Hoi Chanh, or returnees, were given political and vocational training for two months in Chieu Hoi centers and then released to return to their families. This training gave the rallier a much better chance to adjust to a normal

life. The four year plan placed great emphasis on training and finding jobs for the returnees. Some selected volunteers were utilized as members of armed propaganda teams who visited the families of their former Viet Cong comrades in an effort to induce them to rally. In addition to the regular ralliers, by early 1973 the government had granted Chieu Hoi status to almost 11,000 carefully selected

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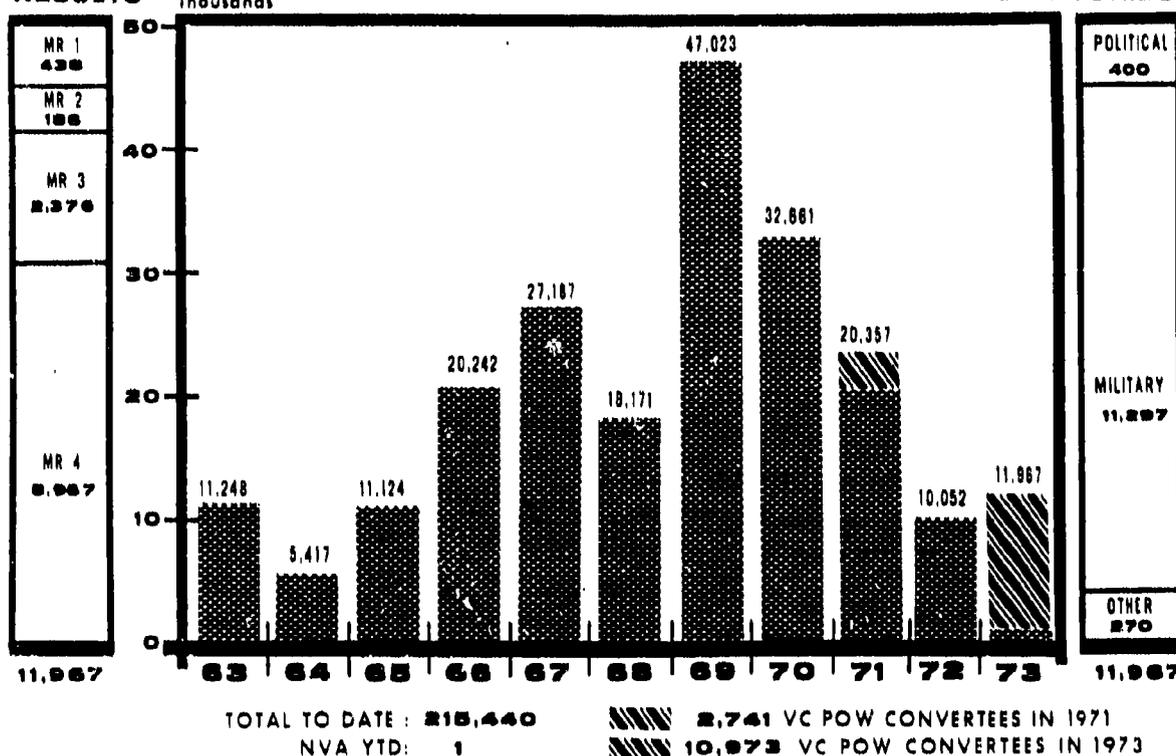
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GREATER NATIONAL UNITY (CHIEU HOI - OPEN ARMS)

MR 1973
RESULTS

3 FEB 1973

CATEGORIES



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-8

prisoners of war who were then permitted to return to their homes.²⁷

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

(U) The second objective of the four year plan was local self-government. The basic aims of this objective were to consolidate government organizations, to improve local administration, and to strive toward local management of administrative, economic, and financial affairs. While CORDS had the primary advisory responsibility in the field for self-government programs, USAID provided significant support at the national level, particularly in public administration and local revenue improvement.

(U) The local administration program concerned the functioning of the nation's nearly 13,000 separate village and hamlet governments. As a part of this program, village elections in 97 percent of South Vietnam's villages had been held by 1 April 1972. Another goal at that time was to improve the quality of local government by providing training for all village and hamlet officials. Province mobile assistance teams (PMAT), comprised of key province staff members and service chiefs, made a significant contribution by periodically visiting villages in the province to supervise, assist, and guide village and hamlet officials in accomplishing their duties.

(U) Unfortunately, as a result of the NVA

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invasion at Easter, PMAT operations were discontinued in many provinces. In others, their effectiveness declined due to preoccupation with more urgent military operations and security matters. At the end of 1972 and early 1973, as a cease-fire became imminent, the national government was urged to renew its efforts at making personal contact with the people through well-organized and effective PMAT operations.

(U) In order for the nation's provinces, districts, and villages to function effectively, they needed the financial resources to support the people's needs and aspirations. The Government of Vietnam instituted a local revenue improvement program aimed at upgrading the revenue collection capability of local governments. The goal for 1972 was to have eight provinces, five cities, and 300 villages self-sufficient. Further, community defense and local development goals, as prescribed in the 1972-75 plan, called for total self-sufficiency on the part of all 44 provinces by the end of 1975, and operational self-sufficiency for administrative expenses in 1,600 of the 2,200 villages. These goals had a good chance of being achieved long before the 1975 deadline because of the new tax decree, #014, that was signed into law on 21 October 1973. Beginning

in 1973, the tax on rice lands would range from a minimum of 1,600 piasters per hectare to a maximum of 4,000 piasters per hectare for premium rice land. The old rates ranged from a minimum of 13 piasters per hectare to a maximum of 350 piasters. Villages would be allowed to keep 80 percent of these revenues for their village budget, with the remaining 20 percent going to the province budget.

(U) To give all Vietnamese citizens an opportunity to join in the democratic process, the Government of Vietnam encouraged the establishment of people's organizations. By 30 November 1972 the number of people's organizations totalled 8,678, with 2,322,128 members. The primary objective of these citizens' organizations was to build social interest among the people through their participation in social and economic development within their communities. These organizations were subsidized by the national government through 1972. Future financial assistance would come from the province budgets or people's contributions.²⁴

(U) A prime source of support for the Viet Cong in the past was the youth of the nation. In an effort to reverse this trend and involve its youth in active government programs, the national

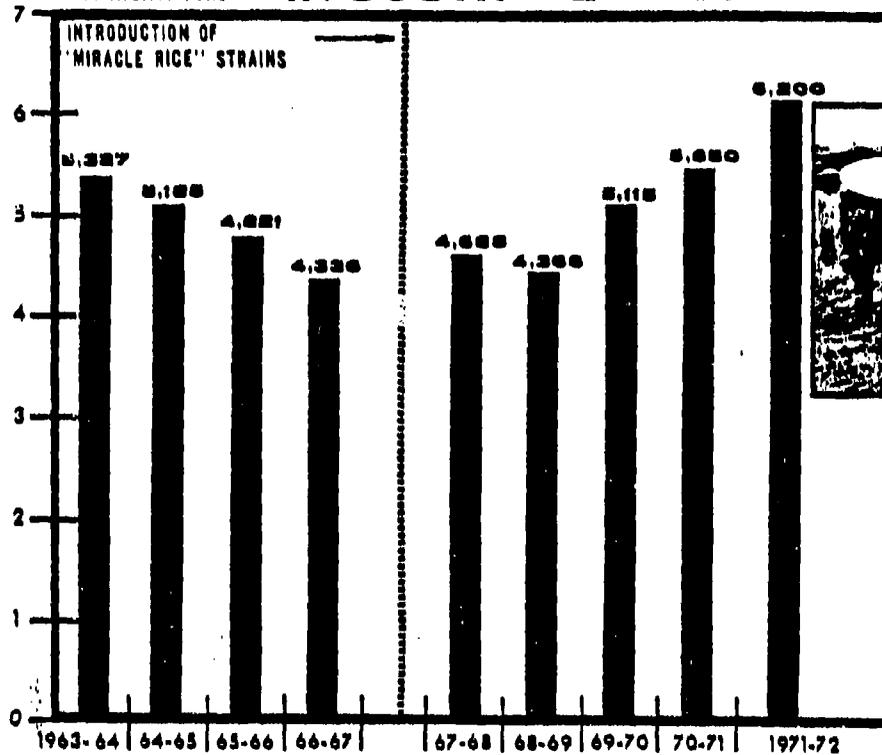


District information teams helped explain government initiatives to the people.

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Rice Production IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Millions Of Metric Tons



SOURCE: MACCORDS

administration established youth councils in most villages. These councils, under the leadership of youth service chiefs, developed programs which included sports, agricultural and craft projects, and civic action efforts. Youths were also involved in People's Self-Defense Force programs. Through these programs, the government hoped to involve the youth in nation building and to cut the enemy completely away from this source of manpower.

(U) To insure that the people understood the government's programs and their responsibilities as citizens, the People's Information Program made the publicity of government programs the responsibility of all government officials. Radio, television, motion pictures, and newspapers were employed to bring the government to the people. District information teams traveled extensively, making face-to-face contact with the people, answering their

questions, and building their sense of responsibility as citizens.²⁹

LOCAL SELF-DEVELOPMENT

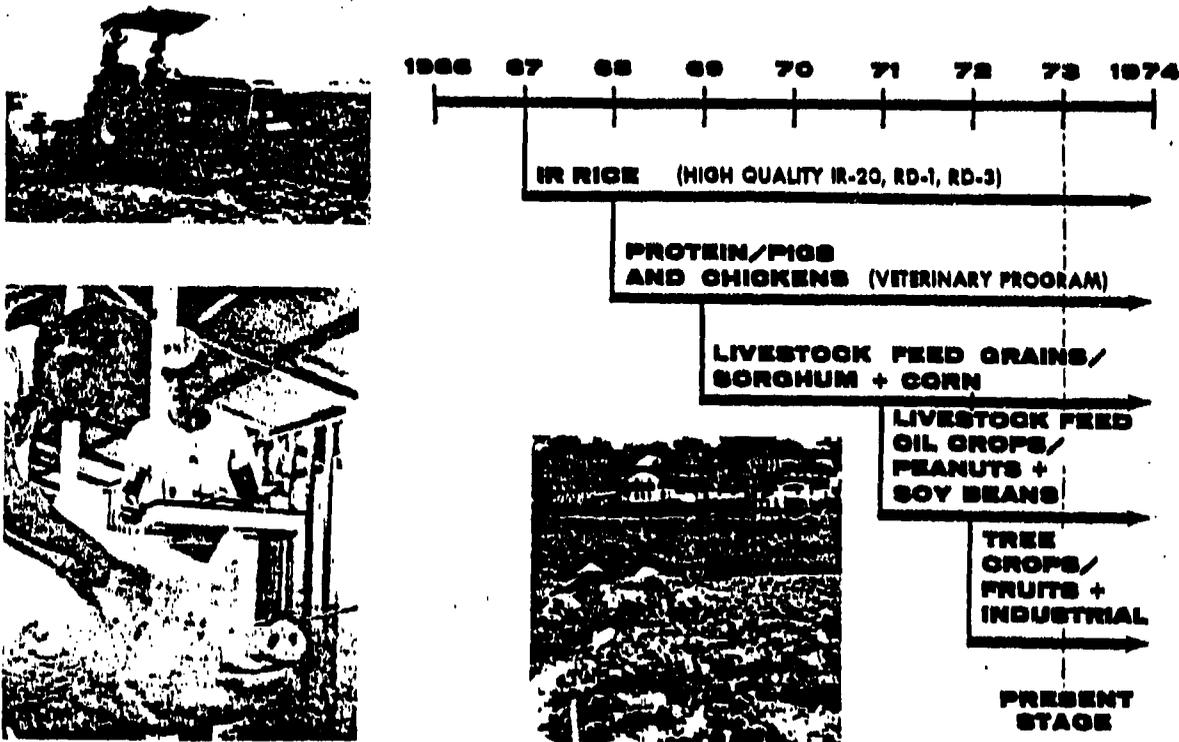
(U) The last and largest of the objectives of the four year plan in terms of number of programs was local self-development. The development programs were designed to provide a better way of life for the people and to move the nation forward on the road toward economic self-sufficiency. These programs were formulated not only to improve the quality of life, but also to gain support for the local and central governments. The CORDS-USAID partnership was most evident in this group of programs. All were funded by USAID; CORD provided assistance, advice, and monitoring at the local level. The economic development program aimed to develop the local economy by raising agricultural and industrial production. Emphas:

Figure D-1

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AGRICULTURE :

Development Scheme for Vietnam



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-10

was placed on the development of cooperatives and agricultural production credits to meet local demands. A major goal of the four year plan was to raise the level of exports to offset reductions in American economic aid.

(U) Before the war Vietnam was self-sufficient in rice production and even sold surpluses on the international market. During the war production fell sharply, and large quantities of rice had to be imported into the country. In 1972 the continuing offensive, adverse weather conditions, and problems in transportation and distribution required the importation of approximately 285,000 metric tons of rice (Fig. D-9).

(U) Realizing that the introduction of miracle rice to Asia would eventually create surpluses on the market, the government encouraged crop diversification and modernization of agriculture. Fishery and animal husbandry programs were aimed at

increasing the output of fish and animals for domestic consumption and export. Development of fisheries and canning factories was emphasized. The diversification program progressed well, but was of necessity a long term project (Fig. D-10).⁸⁰

Rural Credit Program

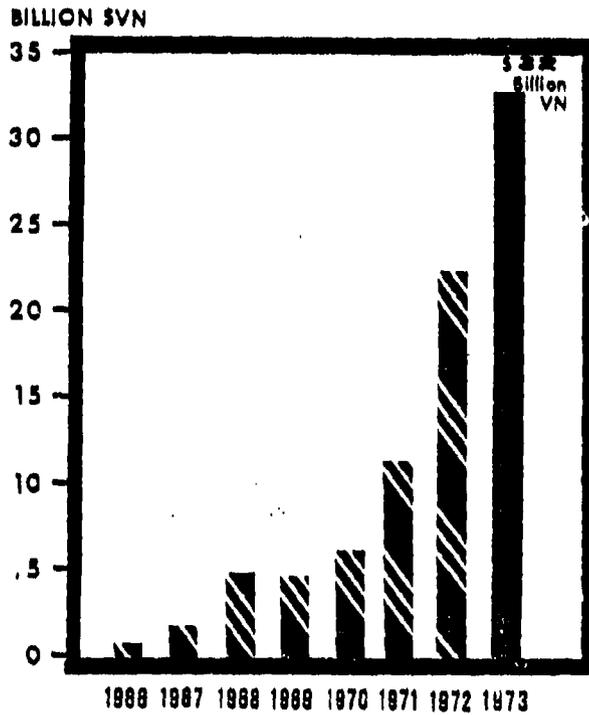
(U) An infusion of development capital was necessary so that modern technology in the form of mechanization could be applied, and so that irrigation, fertilizers, and pesticides could be applied to the farm land. The Government of Vietnam rural credit program provided a means for these improvements to occur. The goal of establishing at least one branch of the Vietnamese Agricultural Development Bank (ADB) in each province was achieved. Forty-seven branches of the ADB loaned over 32 billion piasters (Fig. D-11). An additional 2 billion piasters were loaned by private banks, which were

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RURAL CREDIT PROGRAM

ADB LOAN ACTIVITY



- OPERATES AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB)
- ESTABLISHES AND SUPPORTS PRIVATE RURAL BANKS
- CAPITALIZES THE VSD RURAL DEVELOPMENT CREDIT PROGRAM

SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-11

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established and supported by the ADB. Twenty-five private rural banks were in operation in 1972, and 85 more were to be established by 1975. The rural credit program also provided capital for the village self-development rural development credit program, which provided small loans to individual farmers. These loans, which were limited to 30,000 piasters, were approved by credit committees in each village, which made recommendations to the province agricultural development bank. The bank then provided the loan to the farmer at an average interest rate of 18 percent per year. Although many people still continued to borrow from private sources and pay extremely high interest rates, this program offered the opportunity for many farmers to borrow at reasonable rates.³¹

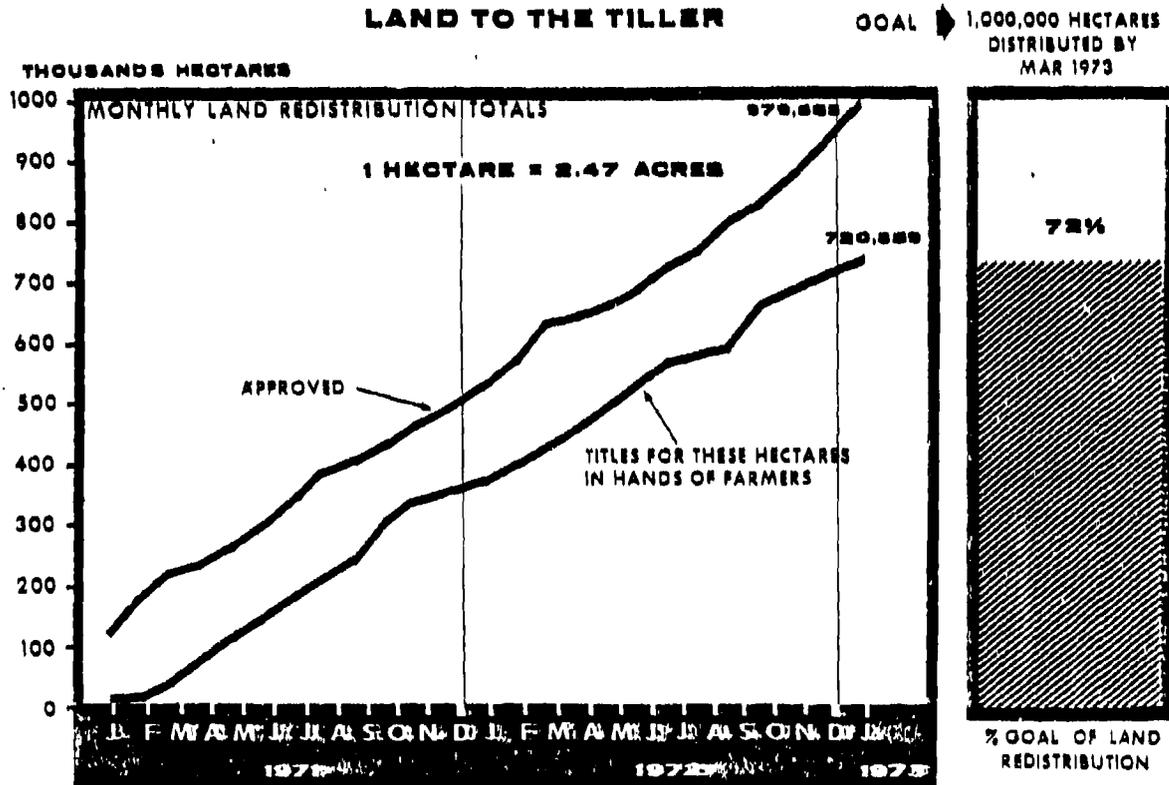
Village Self-Development Program

(U) The village self-development program had other means of injecting development capital into the rural villages of the nation. Each village which attained 100 percent self-sufficiency in 1971 received

300,000 piasters from the government for public use and income-producing projects under the Rural Credit Program. All other villages received grants which were dependent upon their population. Villages that reserved a portion of their local revenue funds for self-development projects qualified for additional government funds. American support for this program was scheduled to end in 1973, and Government of Vietnam support was to be reduced progressively as more and more villages became self-sufficient.

(U) The province and city self-development program provided money for public works projects related to pacification and development objectives in rural areas and gave province councils the wherewithal to be responsive to the needs of their constituents. The program consisted of two primary funds. The National Fund for Local Development, administered by province pacification and development councils, provided for repair and reconstruction of secondary roads and bridges and irrigation works. The secondary roads program received about four-

LAND REFORM LAND TO THE TILLER



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-12

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fifths of this fund. The Province Development Fund allowed elected province councils to respond to some of the politically important needs of their constituents. Included were important local projects such as classrooms and dispensaries. The National Fund for Local Development was phased out at the end of 1972 as local governments became more self-sufficient.⁴²

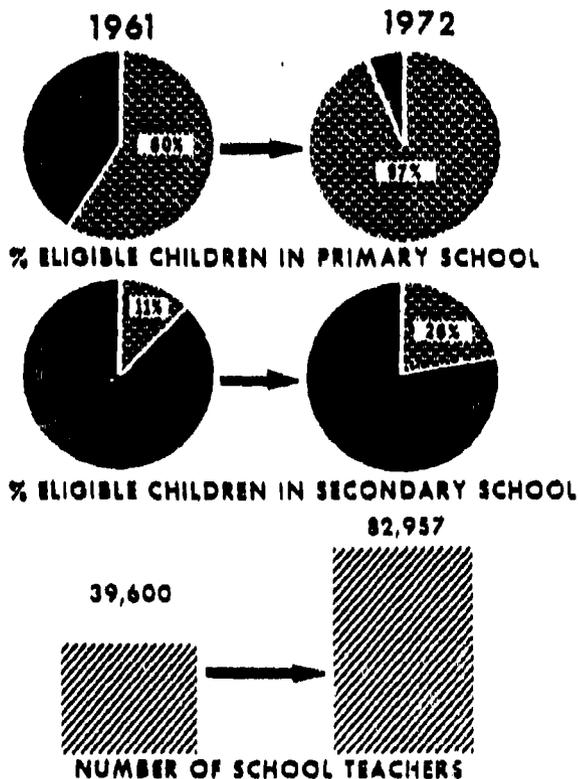
Land Reform

(U) The land reform program offered some 800,000 Vietnamese an opportunity to own their own land and better their standard of living. The former land tenancy caused much discontent among

the farmers, for they were required to give 35 percent of their normal crop to the landlord. The government, recognizing this, instituted a land-to-the-tiller program to give ownership to the farmer working the land. In 1969 a land freeze decree went into effect and guaranteed the farmer the possession of the land, with no interference from his former landlord. With land reform a great deal of the political benefit accrued to the national government. Yet, the actual plot surveying and title issuance under the land-to-the-tiller law of 1970 had to be accomplished before the local peasant could be assured of his secure position as an owner-farmer. The goal was to distribute titles to

EDUCATION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



SOURCE: MACCORDS

NEW SHIFTS IN EMPHASIS

EXPANSION OF FACILITIES



QUALITY OF TEACHING

CENTRALIZED BUREAUCRACY



DECENTRALIZATION OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

CLASSIC ACADEMIC SUBJECTS



TECHNICAL/VOCATIONAL APPROACH

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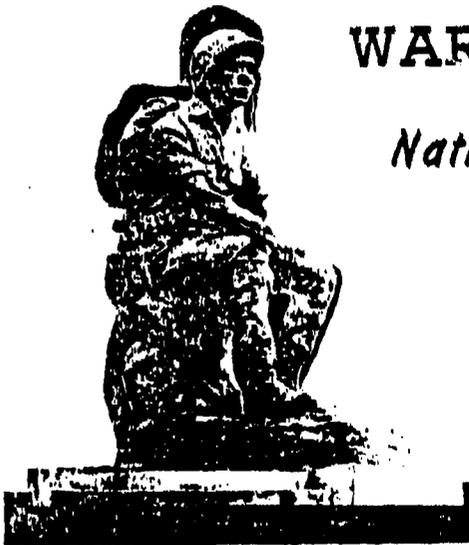
one million hectares of land by March 1973. A further goal to distribute titles to all rice and secondary crop lands (1.3 million hectares) was established in 1972. Distribution depended upon land availability in secure areas (Fig. D-12). All landlords who had their land distributed received compensation in the form of 20 percent cash and the remainder in government bonds which matured over an eight year period, paying 10 percent interest per year.²³

Related Programs

(U) Accomplishments in education over the past

decade were significant. School enrollment more than doubled, and the government established a goal of having all eligible children in elementary schools by 1975. A shortage of qualified teachers and classroom space limited the number of children attending secondary schools. To correct this, the national administration placed increased emphasis in secondary level teacher training and some classroom construction. The decentralization of education management and an increase in technical and vocational education were also among the government goals (Fig. D-13).

(U) One of the most serious social consequences



WAR VETERANS

National Rehabilitation Institute

VOCATIONAL AND PHYSICAL REHABILITATION

1972 13,000 PERSONS ASSISTED
 1973 15,000 ASSISTED (PROJECTED)
 (40% VETERANS)

Job Placement

1972 3,600 PLACEMENTS
 1973 6,000 PLACEMENTS (PROJECTED)

Housing

1972 9,544 UNITS CONSTRUCTED
 FOR VETERANS
 1973 PAYMENT OF HOUSING
 SUBSIDY FOR 14,500
 VETERANS (PROJECTED)

Pensions

RETIRED VETERANS	36,551
DISABLED VETERANS	79,865
WAR WIDOWS	121,709
DEPENDENT PARENTS	125,190
ORPHANS	153,144
NATIONAL WARDS	333,692
TOTAL	<u>850,151</u>

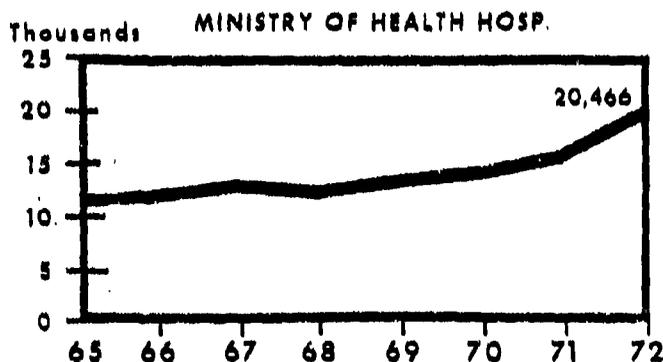
SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-14

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MINISTRY OF HEALTH MEDICAL PERSONNEL

PHYSICIANS	677
NURSES	3,465
ASSISTANT NURSES	3,329
MIDWIVES	1,240
RURAL MIDWIVES	3,038
PHARMACISTS	350
DENTISTS	65
TOTAL	12,164



Goal

ONE HOSPITAL BED FOR
EVERY 800 PEOPLE BY
1975

SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-15

of the war was the large number of veterans and their families dependent upon government pensions. Legislation passed in 1970 steadily increased the war veterans' budget. In addition to the payment of pensions, the war veteran's program emphasized three main efforts: rehabilitation, job replacement, and housing. Shown in Figure D-14 are 1972 accomplishments and 1973 projections in these areas.

(C) Construction and maintenance of roads was one of the vital keys to pacification of the countryside. The public works program involved the maintenance of Vietnam's network of national and provincial roads, the improvement of water and electric utilities in the nation's cities and rural areas, and the construction of adequate housing.

(U) The public health program was aimed at the organization, management, and development of health facilities throughout the country. Figure D-15 shows the number of government health

personnel and hospital beds by year. A major objective of the four year plan was to make more efficient use of Vietnam's existing health resources so that both military and civilian patients might receive adequate care. Present facilities were to be increased so that there would be one hospital bed for every 800 people by 1975.⁴⁴

War Victims

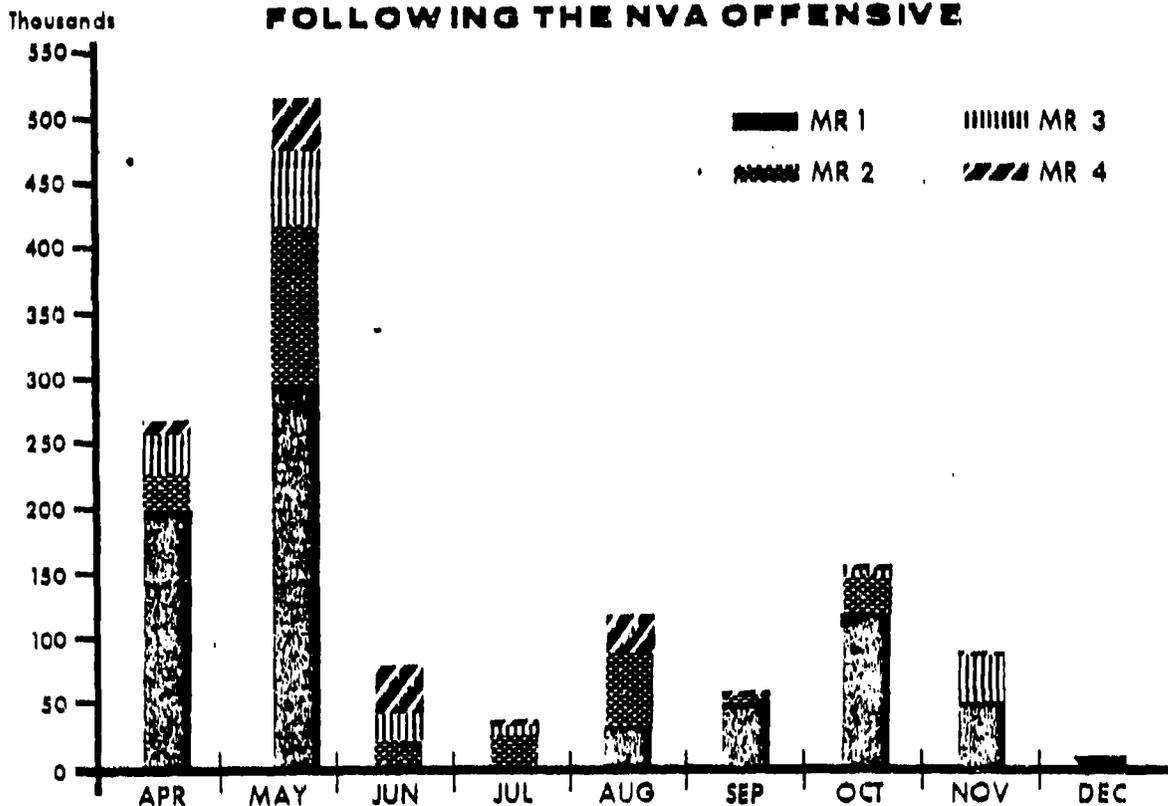
(U) The NVA invasion sharply divided events and accomplishments of the 1972 refugee program. Prior to the enemy invasion, all major programs for refugees and other civilian war victims were being successfully implemented. At the end of March about 790,000 people were receiving refugee assistance from the Government of Vietnam. More than three-fourths of those had already returned to their home villages where they were being given food and housing allowances to assist in rebuild

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ing their lives. Almost 89,000 were in temporary status just prior to being resettled, and about 80,000 were being resettled. Almost 55,000 people were paid full return-to-village (RTV) benefits in the first three months of 1972, and about 6,000 received full resettlement benefits. With fewer than 20,000 new refugees generated during the first quarter of 1972, the RTV program was the focal point of refugee assistance efforts. Then came the offensive (Fig. D-16). Nearly 1.8 million people from 28 provinces were left homeless at some time during the last nine months of 1972, and over

875,000 of them were still living in more than 150 refugee camps in 22 provinces at the end of December 1972 (Fig. D-17). An estimated 400,000 of the total were able to return home at some time during the period, and the remainder were thought to be living with friends or otherwise caring for themselves. In general, the Vietnamese Government's reaction to the refugee situation was commendable. Emergency assistance—providing huge numbers of people with food, water, shelter, medical care, and other necessities—took precedence over all refugee assistance and, in fact, over all other

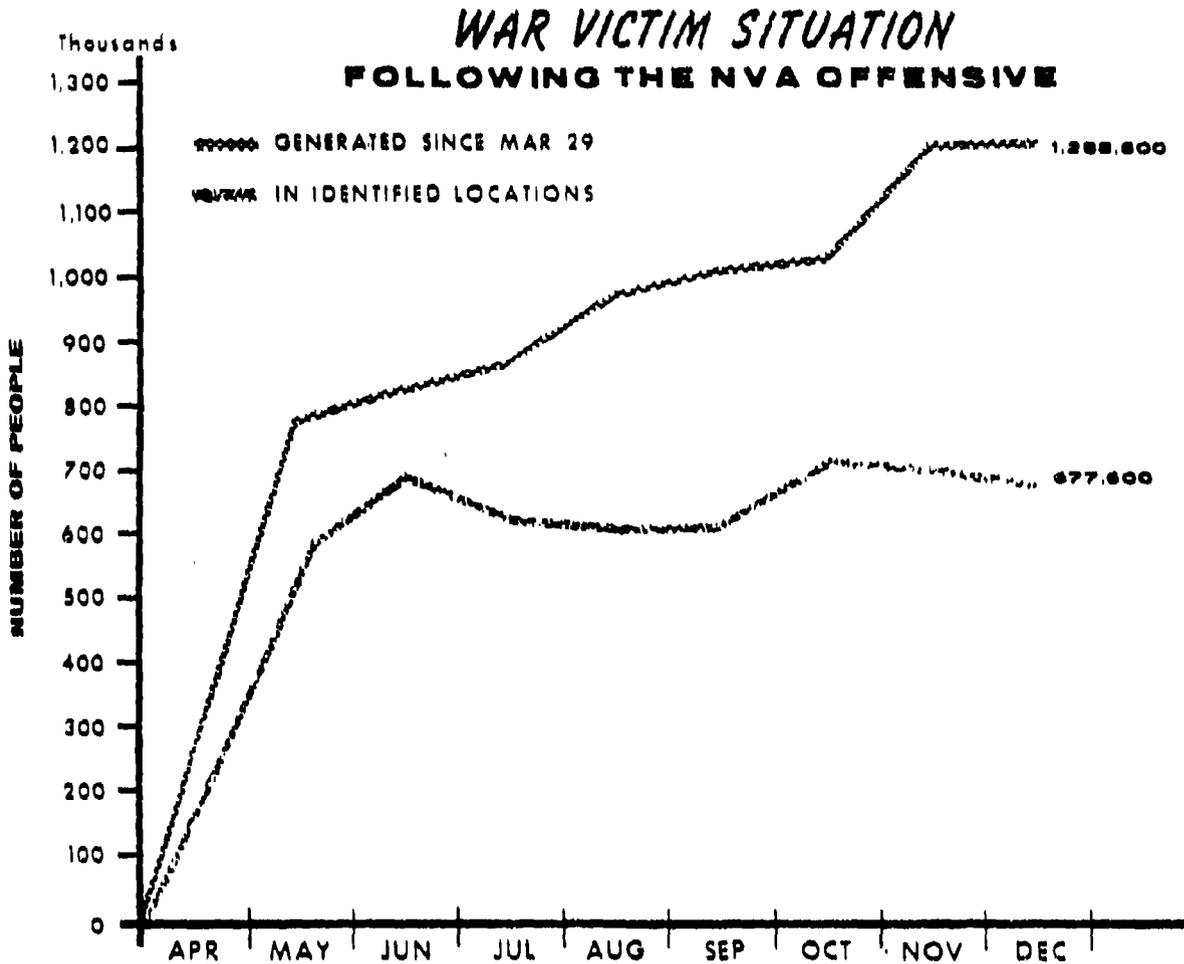
MONTHLY GENERATION OF WAR VICTIMS FOLLOWING THE NVA OFFENSIVE



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-16

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SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-17

Vietnam programs with the single exception of the war effort. Government officials and innumerable Vietnamese private groups and individuals, religious organizations, and business groups provided a wide variety of goods and services. The US Government provided more than 14 billion piasters for 1972 refugee relief through the Republic of Vietnam, the equivalent of US \$31 million. The US contributed an additional US \$1.26 million in direct dollar costs. Abandoned US military bases were used as refugee sites; some 2,000 US tents provided temporary housing in some areas; USARV

excess food and property and PL-480 commodities were used in refugee camps; and US advisors helped in every phase of refugee assistance. Major camp improvement and refugee employment programs were launched during the final few months of the year. Security continued to be the prime factor keeping refugees in camps and away from their homes. As security was gradually reestablished in the countryside, and the cease-fire was to take effect in 1973, the thrust of refugee aid began to shift once again to return to villages and resettlement.²²

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SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Urban

(U) A special program addressed urban problems. War in the countryside caused an influx of people into the cities so that almost 84 percent of the population in 1972 lived in the urban areas. Growth of the urban areas outdistanced the development of public services. Since earlier development plans in Vietnam had singled out the countryside at the expense of the urban areas, the government was obliged to place increased emphasis on urban problems. Some of the more important steps in this critical effort were the creation of a central urban affairs committee, formation of local urban affairs councils, drafting of city development

plans, and initiation of urban self-development projects keyed to the large population centers.

Ethnic Minorities

(U) Another important concern was the ethnic minorities program, which brought aid to the nearly one million members of the Highland tribes of central Vietnam. The military significance of the Highlands made the loyalty of the Montagnards more important than their numbers would indicate. For the Highland peoples, the Republic continued the Montagnard land reform program. Additional steps to improve the lives of the Highlanders included the National Montagnard Training Center for Highland Cadre in Pleiku, increased educational

HAMLET EVALUATION SYSTEM (HES)

DEFINITIONS OF "HES RATINGS" CATEGORIES....

• A, B HAMLETS

Security fully established, effective local government.

• C HAMLETS

GVN has military and administrative control
Viet Cong harass citizens outside of hamlet.

• D, E HAMLETS

Hamlet itself is insecure, VC political cadre are active, GVN maintains some presence.

• V HAMLETS

Hamlet under Viet Cong control.

SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-18

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opportunities, and special development programs in nearly every ministry's plans.

Elimination of Social Evils

(U) During the course of the war certain social problems, particularly the use of drugs, developed to an alarming degree, and the government devoted considerable efforts to meet these problems. In July 1971 Operation VI DAN (For the People) was launched. Targets of this operation were narcotics, smuggling, theft, vagrancy, desertion, prostitution, and gambling. Achievements through 1972 were encouraging, but much remained to be done. Consequently, the government included a program for the eradication of social evils in the four year plan. The extent of these social evils were forecast for 50 percent reduction each year and for a return to the 1959-60 rate by the end of the four year plan.

Hamlet Evaluation System

(U) One broad measure of the success of the three major objectives was provided by the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES). US District Senior Advisors and Vietnamese HES officers answered

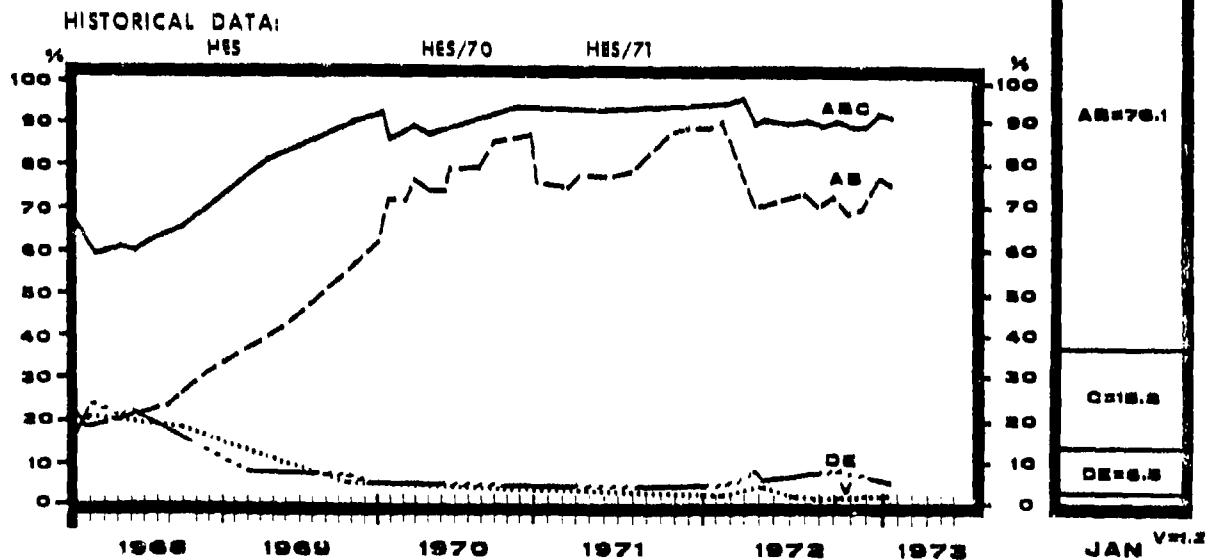
precise questions each month about each of the hamlets and villages within the districts where they worked. Their responses were then analyzed and an overall rating was given to each hamlet. These ratings took the form of letter grades (Fig. D-18). By combining individual hamlet ratings, province, region, and national ratings could be obtained. Figure D-19 shows the percent of population in each of the six "HES Rating" categories.³⁰

Pacification Attitude Analysis System

(U) A further analytical tool included the Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS). PAAS was developed with the support and approval of the Government of Vietnam's Central Pacification and Development Council to provide the capability of determining trends in Vietnamese attitudes towards pacification and development. The basis of this system was a survey conducted monthly by three man teams of Vietnamese researchers guided by a questionnaire covering the three principal areas of security, government, and economics. A cross-section of the adult population formed the survey sample; computerized output was developed from their responses.

HES RATING POPULATION TRENDS

31 JAN 1973



SOURCE: MACCORDS

Figure: D-15

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IMPACT OF THE ENEMY INVASION

(U) Although the four year plan was soundly based and well-executed during 1972, the NVA invasion adversely affected progress toward pacification. The loss of previously secure hamlets, disruption of major lines of communication, generation of new refugees, and redirection of funds and manpower produced severe setbacks in many programs.

(C) However, by the end of August allied forces realized increasingly that the enemy offensive had been blunted; the time for recovery efforts was at hand. The community defense and local development effort began to work toward returning to the time schedule of the four year plan. The last quarter of the year was characterized by activity to first recoup the losses sustained during the period of the offensive and then to achieve advances toward the ultimate goals of the four year plan. The overall task of recovery encompassed the restoration of security, the reestablishment of governmental services, and the repair or reconstruction of damaged and destroyed public facilities.

(U) The task of reconstructing damaged facilities was addressed seriously by the Republic, and the administrative machinery was set in motion in July and August. Hard hit provinces were tasked to submit province recovery plans to be reviewed by the Central Pacification and Development Council (CPDC). Seventeen provinces submitted recovery plans for consideration. These plans were reviewed by the International Reconstruction Committee; the government ministries and CPDC committed roughly 484 million piasters in re-programmed funds for accomplishment of approved recovery projects.

(U) CORDS and USAID advisors worked closely to monitor the release of funds and their receipt by the provinces. Information gleaned in this manner was used as a basis for advising the CPDC on management of the effort. In addition, province-level advisors urged province officials to take timely actions such as the rapid preparation of project dossiers and prompt initiation of construction. In December 1972 CPDC began the first of series of recovery progress review meetings. At these meetings, held at approximately 10 day intervals, each approved project was reported on by the regional representative until such time as the project was completed. Regional pacification and development councils made province visits to assist in the recovery effort and reported to the CPDC any problems which could not be resolved at the regional level.

(U) The initial series of recovery plans was intended to encompass that amount of work which would be accomplished in a six month time frame. Phuoc Tuy, the first province with an approved and

funded recovery plan, nearly completed its first reconstruction increment by early 1973; preparations were being made for submission of a plan covering the next six month increment.

LOCAL SELF-DEFENSE

(U) The enemy invasion tested the viability of self-defense programs, for continued progress in development projects depended on local security. The Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) was used to measure the extent of government control.

(C) During the period of the enemy offensive, the AB population element of the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) security rating for the Republic of Vietnam regressed 15 percent from 82.7 percent in February 1972 to 70.3 percent in August 1972. Military Region 1 sustained the highest regression in AB Security Rating (49.3 percent) followed by Military Region 4 (11 percent), Military Region 2 (10.4 percent), and Military Region 3 (4.2 percent). The percentage of the population under enemy control (E, V) rose from 0.5 percent in February to 3.2 percent in August. By this indicator Military Regions 1 and 2 were the most affected regions with 7.1 percent and 9.2 percent, respectively, of their populations rated E or V in August.

(C) During the Tet offensive of 1968 the number of VC controlled hamlets rose from 3,786 in December 1967 to a high of 4,093 in March 1968. The increase in number of VC controlled hamlets (HES ratings of V) from February to August 1972 is shown below:

	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
VC Hamlets	7	226	983	1,164	1,009	968	1,023

Of particular interest was the increase in the number of VC controlled hamlets in August after a downward trend in June and July from the high point in May. Although the percentage change was much larger in 1972 than in 1968, the overall situation at the end of August 1972 was much superior to that of any time during the 1968 offensive. In both 1968 and 1972 the number of VC controlled hamlets peaked out in the second month after the offensive began.

(C) A region-by-region analysis of the HES security rating shows considerable variation between and within regions. The greatest impact of the offensive occurred in Military Region 1 where Quang Tri was lost at the end of April. A portion of the province, however, was recovered in heavy fighting. None of the population still in Quang Tri was rated secure (AB) as of 31 August. Quang Nam and Quang Ngai sustained major regressions of 84.2 percent and 83.2 percent, respectively, so

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that in August only 9.5 percent of the population in Quang Nam (exclusive of Da Nang City) and 24.5 percent of the population in Quang Ngai were rated secure. Quang Tin and Thua Thien also sustained serious regressions of 45.1 percent and 37.1 percent respectively, after the beginning of the offensive.

(C) In Military Region 2, three of the five northern provinces sustained major or moderate regressions (Kontum - 96 percent, Phu Yen - 40 percent, and Binh Dinh - 34.8 percent), while the other two provinces, Phu Bon and Pleiku, sustained regressions of 10.4 percent and 7.9 percent respectively. The seven southern provinces sustained very minor regressions (less than 3 percent) or registered gains. At the end of August the percentages of the population rated secure (AB) in Kontum, Binh Dinh, and Phu Yen were 3.1 percent, 26.1 percent, and 35.7 percent respectively.

(C) Although Military Region 3 apparently sustained the smallest regression of any region, the security ratings were biased in a favorable direction by the presence of the large secure populations in Gia Dinh Province and Saigon (98.6 and 100 percent AB ratings, respectively). If these populations are excluded from Military Region 3's security ratings, the February through August regression becomes 10.8 percent (vice 4.2 percent) and the percentage of the population rated AB in August becomes 76.8 percent (vice 89.7 percent). Within the region five provinces sustained major or moderate regressions (Binh Long - 100 percent, Long Khanh - 27.3 percent, Long An - 19.6 percent, Hau Nghia - 18.5 percent, and Phuoc Tuy - 17.6 percent), while six sustained regressions of less than nine percent or registered gains. In August four provinces (Phuoc Tuy, Hau Nghia, Long An, and Binh Long) posted their lowest security ratings since the offensive began. None of the population remaining in Binh Long was rated secure and approximately 70 percent of the province was occupied by the enemy. In Hau Nghia only 45.7 percent of the population was rated secure (AB).

(C) In Military Region 4, three provinces — Go Cong, An Giang, and Sa Dec — sustained zero regression after the offensive began, maintaining their AB security ratings at 99 percent or above. The remaining provinces, however, all sustained regressions of varying degrees. Chuong Thien was the most affected province, regressing 46.3 percent to the point where, in August, only 27.8 percent of the population was rated secure (AB). Four other provinces sustained moderate regression: Vinh Binh - 28.8 percent, Dinh Tuong - 23.3 percent, Kien Giang - 20 percent, and Kien Phong - 19.4 percent). The remaining eight provinces in Military Region 4 sustained regressions varying from 16.2

percent (An Xuyen) to one percent (Vinh Long). Of the 13 provinces which sustained setbacks, six registered their lowest ratings in July or August. Five others slipped in August from their improved July ratings.

(C) The Pacification Attitude Analysis System (PAAS) indicated that the rural villagers' perception of the security situation changed after the offensive began. In January 1972, 32 percent of the respondents considered security to be improving while only eight percent felt that it was becoming worse. In May a strong reversal of opinion was noted — only six percent of the respondents felt security was improving, while 24 percent felt it was getting worse. By August, however, the spread had narrowed; the percentage of respondents who felt security was improving had climbed to 18 percent while those who thought it was getting worse had dropped to 16 percent.³⁷

(C) Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) results during the recovery period following the NVA invasion pointed toward firm gains for allied forces. In December a 7.2 percent increase in AB rated villages left 79.6 percent of the population in AB status, comparing favorably with 82.7 percent in February 1972. Losses in January 1973 reflected enemy efforts to consolidate gains prior to a cease-fire accord. HES AB security ratings are shown below with changes from the previous month in parenthesis.³⁸

SEP	OCT	NOV
72.0 (+1.7)	89.9 (-2.1)	72.4 (+2.5)
DEC		JAN
79.6 (+7.2)	76.1 (-3.4)	

Territorial Forces

(C) Province advisor reports revealed that the performance of the Territorial Forces during the offensive varied from outstanding to poor throughout the Republic of Vietnam and in some cases surpassed that of ARVN. In Quang Tri and Binh Long, the Regional Forces (RF) made a determined stand against superior forces, but in Binh Dinh and Kontum, Regional and Popular Forces made little effort to stop the enemy in the early days of the offensive. In Military Region 4 the Territorials were spread too thin during the initial phase of the offensive, and numerous operating bases (OBs) were overrun or abandoned by their understrength defenders. A subsequent consolidation of bases however, freed Regional Force units to operate in a mobile role against the enemy forces. In a number of provinces throughout Vietnam the Territorial Forces were withdrawn from the countryside to protect the district and province towns. Withdrawal of these forces might have been necessary in some

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cases, but in most areas, according to field reports, this resulted in the surrender of the countryside to the enemy without resistance. After the initial threat had subsided, most of the forces returned to the countryside to restore security. Nationwide Regional Force strength declined steadily for the first six months from 92 percent in January to 87 percent in June. As a result of the NVA invasion, the recruitment program was revitalized, and RF strength was raised to 93 percent by the end of October. Popular Force (PF) strengths also fell from 97 percent in January to 94 percent in May. PF recruiting remained stable, but the deactivation of PF platoons to provide spaces for Regional Force units increased the percentage of assigned PF strength to 99 percent in October (Territorial Forces strength figures exclude personnel in the pipeline). Of the 45 sector tactical command posts planned for activation under the Territorial Forces Upgrade Program, 25 had been organized by 30 September. Additionally, 134 company groups had been converted to mobile battalions. The additional spaces required for this program were provided by deactivating 8,808 spaces.

(C) New units organized under the upgrade program were partially equipped with equipment drawn from other Territorial Forces units. At the end of September no equipment for this program had arrived in Vietnam from off-shore sources. Materiel shortages, particularly crew-served weapons and communications equipment, existed in all regions, and were most serious in Military Region 1. By early 1973, however, equipment shortages were for the most part in the process of being eliminated.

(C) In Military Region 3 Territorial Forces successfully bore the brunt of enemy attack in October; their morale remained high. Aggressive Territorial Forces maintained the initiative throughout the country by operating outside population centers. In late October prospects of a cease-fire dimmed morale somewhat and enemy land grabbing activity increased. Attempting to seize control of population centers, the enemy cut major lines of communication and abducted and assassinated selected individuals. In response, Popular Forces (PF) pulled into population centers in many provinces while Regional Forces (RF) simultaneously fanned out into the countryside to assert government presence.⁴⁰ This tactic successfully halted enemy efforts and from mid-November through mid-January activity on both sides remained at a low level.

(C) According to the PAAS, the villagers' perception in August of the performance of the Popular Forces was highly favorable; 77 percent considered their performance to be effective. This opinion represented a slight improvement over the opinion held prior to the offensive. In the case of

the Regional Forces, popular opinion improved substantially. Prior to the offensive, only 48 percent of those surveyed considered the Regional Forces to be effective, but in August 74 percent registered this opinion.⁴⁰

People's Self-Defense Force

(C) Throughout the country the performance of the People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF) as a village security force during the offensive was generally reported to be marginal with few exceptions. According to provincial and regional reports, the failure to achieve optimum employment of the PSDF in support of comprehensive and effective village security plans remained a general weakness. The mobilization of 17-year-olds for full-time military service had some adverse effects on the PSDF in a number of provinces. These effects were somewhat ameliorated by the initial mobilization of these personnel into the local Territorial Forces as well as by the relaxation of the expanded draft requirements. The PAAS indicated that the villagers' opinion of the PSDF was not appreciably altered by the offensive. Both before and after the offensive began, about half of the rural populace surveyed considered PSDF performance to be effective. At least 600,000 combat People's Self-Defense Force members attended the intensified combat refresher training during October in an effort to improve their performance.⁴¹

(C) In December, the government emphasized the PSDF's cease-fire role, which was primarily to combat enemy military, terrorist, and political activity at the local level. Public media programs aimed at the PSDF emphasized the government position in the cease-fire negotiations and the duties of the PSDF both prior to and following the signing of a cease-fire agreement. In addition, the first of a planned countrywide series of rallies and seminars oriented toward the political aspects of a cease-fire was held in the Saigon area on 31 December for the PSDF. Approximately 7,000 Saigon area PSDF members and numerous national and provincial level officials attended the rallies and seminars.⁴²

National Police

(C) Advisors reported that, generally, police performance was adequate during the offensive. In Military Regions 2 and 4 the police were particularly effective in helping to prosecute the Special Anti-Viet Cong Infrastructure Campaign aimed at crippling the guerrillas (Fig. D-20). During the period of the enemy offensive the transfer of responsibility from Phung Hoang operations from province and district intelligence operations centers to the National Police was completed throughout Vietnam. During the period of this transfer Phung

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Hoang results dropped noticeably, but in all regions there was a subsequent recovery to previous levels or higher. In all regions except Military Region 3 Phung Hoang neutralisations climbed substantially during the period of the offensive, but this increase was caused in part by the increased tempo of enemy activity which made the VCI more vulnerable.

(C) With the invasion, new highs in the number of terrorist incidents per month were registered in all regions (Fig. D-5), but within regions the dis-

operations and coordinating centers of police operations centers (POC); all autonomous cities, Saigon, all provinces except Quang Tri, and 230 of 244 districts completed transfer of functions. BG Nguyen Khac Binh, head of the National Police Command (NPC), ordered acceleration of the rural police FM radio communications program in October to counter the rise in terrorism anticipated in a cease-fire situation. There were 945 rural police stations in 20 provinces which did not have police

NATIONAL POLICE SPECIAL ANTI-VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE CAMPAIGN

1 April to 28 October 1972 (Net changes from 30 September to 28 October 1972 are shown in parentheses):

MR	ARRESTED	RELEASED	UNDER INVESTIGATION	PENDING AN TRI*	AN TRI*
CMD.....	949 (+40)	470 (+40)	21 (-19)	77 (-3)	381 (+21)
MR 1.....	4,594 (+358)	2,830 (+316)	172 (-7)	141 (-115)	1,451 (+164)
MR 2.....	6,810 (+698)	2,759 (+414)	394 (-47)	882 (+180)	2,775 (+145)
MR 3.....	3,865 (+661)	2,247 (+402)	252 (+95)	144 (+41)	1,022 (+123)
MR 4.....	6,575 (+233)	3,998 (+231)	204 (+204)	157 (-252)	2,216 (+50)
TOTAL.....	22,598 (+1,955)	12,304 (+1,403)	1,048 (+226)	1,401 (-148)	7,845 (+504)

*An Tri is a special sentencing program for convicted hard core Viet Cong party members.

Source: MACCORDS

Figure: D-20

tribution was not uniform. Field reports showed that, nationwide, terrorist incidents climbed sharply from March to a high point in April, dropped off somewhat in May, and then gradually declined to a low point early in the first week of July. In the second week of July terrorist incidents rebounded sharply to a level just below that experienced in May, declined slightly towards the end of July, and then remained generally level through August. Abductions also followed the general trend of incidents and reached new reported highs throughout Vietnam. According to the PAAS, in 1971 only three percent of the rural villagers considered the VCI in their village to be more effective than the year before, while 80 percent considered the VCI to be less effective, ineffective, or absent. From June through August 1972, however, an average of 20 percent of those surveyed considered the local VCI to be more effective than they were the year before, while only 53 percent considered the VCI to be less effective, or absent.

(C) The National Police Protection of People Against Terrorism (POPAT) Program was reorganized during the months of recovery. In September the government directed transfer of counter-subversion functions of province and district intelligence

FM radio communications. The NPC sent out ten teams of police radio technicians who completed installation of minimum FM communications in 550 of the 845 stations by 25 December.⁴⁵ POPAT training for regional and provincial police cadre was completed in September; all POPAT instruction was finished in December. All of these efforts increased police efficiency against terrorism, but terrorism continued to be a severe problem, particularly in Military Region 1, shown as follows:

**Viet Cong Terrorist Activities
September-December 1972**

	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
TOTAL VICTIMS	1,939	3,278	1,521	1,044
TOTAL INCIDENTS	871	1,386	1,134	866

During December terrorism decreased throughout the country as a result of enemy inactivity and confusion among the Viet Cong concerning an expected cease-fire. Total terrorist incidents declined to the lowest level since the start of the enemy offensive in March 1972.⁴⁴

(C) Policemen, their facilities, and equipment were targets for VC terrorism. Four hundred police-

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men were killed, 1,255 were wounded, and 466 were missing in action from 30 March to 30 November. During the same period the National Police lost 3,357 weapons, 302 radios, 94 vehicles, and one patrol boat. Much of this equipment was to be replaced from existing stocks in the pipeline.⁴⁵ As of 31 December 216 police facilities had been damaged or destroyed since the 30 March invasion. 245 facilities were evacuated; these stations were presumed destroyed.⁴⁶

The Chieu Hoi Program

(C) The Chieu Hoi rate declined sharply in April and continued to decline at a slower rate through May and June. In July, the Chieu Hoi rate rose from the June low and continued rising through August so that the total returnees in August nearly equaled the total recorded in March prior to the invasion. The increase in the Chieu Hoi rate during July and August was attributed by advisors to the numerous military operations which were conducted to regain territory lost during the early months of the invasion. In contrast to previous experience, the number of political Hoi Chanhs had exceeded the number of military returnees since the beginning of the offensive. Although more Hoi Chanhs rallied to the Chieu Hoi program in September, every succeeding month to the end of the year showed a gradual decline. Over the past six years the Chieu Hoi rate declined at the end of the year. The Chieu Hoi Program was significantly affected by a reduction in military activity in December and by the uncertainty generated by the prolonged peace negotiations. Additionally, the pacification objectives of the Ministry of Chieu Hoi became more difficult to achieve when the Ministry decreased the armed propaganda team force structure by 52 percent at the end of November. The reduction lowered the number of operational personnel available to sustain the Chieu Hoi rate at a higher level.⁴⁷

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

(C) In local government and administration, advisors countrywide reported that hamlet and village governments continued to function relatively well during the invasion except in those areas where there was heavy fighting. Of the 2,122 village governments which were in place and operational prior to the offensive, 260 were no longer in place as of 31 August. Many of these village governments functioned, however, in refugee locations (including all 72 villages from Quang Tri). The PAAS tended to confirm the findings that village and hamlet governments continued to function with comparatively little change during the offensive. During July and August, 83 percent of the rural villagers

surveyed felt that the normal activities of local government officials and workers (nonmilitary) had not been curtailed by the offensive. An additional 13 percent considered the curtailment of activities to be minimal.

(C) Regional and provincial advisor reports showed that the effectiveness of the regional, provincial, and district governments throughout Vietnam varied considerably during the period March through August. In Military Region 1 those governments hardest pressed proved to be largely inadequate at the height of the offensive, but by June they had begun functioning again. In Military Region 2 the Kontum Province government collapsed, with many of the civilian and military officials deserting their posts during the height of the enemy offensive. The Pleiku government performed adequately, but the Binh Dinh government rapidly lost control in those areas where the enemy threat was the greatest. Throughout the remainder of Military Region 2 the province governments performed adequately. In Military Region 3 the Binh Long Province government moved its civil operations to Binh Duong, where it assisted refugees while the province chief remained in An Loc to assist in military operations. The governments in Long Khanh and Phuoc Tuy proved weak (the province chief and a number of officials were relieved in Phuoc Tuy), but the remaining governments in Military Region 3 continued to function satisfactorily. Province and district governments in Military Region 4 generally functioned normally with a few exceptions in those provinces that confronted the heaviest enemy pressure. After the start of the offensive a total of 91 province and district chiefs nationwide were replaced, with a concomitant upgrading of general effectiveness.

Revenue Improvement

(C) The Local Revenue Improvement Program (LRIP) — directed at eventually achieving fiscal self-sufficiency for provinces and villages — had collected 47.3 percent of its annual goal as of 31 August 1972. Province revenue goals for 1972 were not expected to be met except in Military Region 4. Ten provinces in the Delta instituted an agricultural development fee of up to \$VN 2,000 per hectare of rice land, and higher for orchard land, as an interim measure pending implementation of a comprehensive national property tax structure imposing higher, more realistic taxes on various categories of agricultural and urban real property. This fee was promulgated in October 1972.

(U) Spread of the Ba Xuyen model agricultural development fee, developed and tried by eight provinces in the Delta, signaled significant progress in the local revenue improvement program. In Octo-

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ber the Cabinet approved, and President Thieu signed, the Real Property Tax Law, based upon the Delta region experiments. This law provided for a one year transitional period beginning on 1 January 1973, which perpetuated the existing system, but also increased significantly the tax ranges on cultivated land. When fully and properly administered, the new tax system would provide 12 to 13.6 billion piasters annually for local financing. The Government of Vietnam planned to train during 1973 some 10,000 local officials on the details of the new tax system.⁴⁸

(C) At the end of November provinces nationwide achieved revenue collections which averaged over 70 percent of their established local Revenue Improvement Program goals. Villages averaged over 90 percent of their goals. With respect to village revenue, achievement approached 100 percent in Military Region 3, primarily a result of the Long An Province village collection record of 248 percent of its established goal. Five Military Region 4 provinces surpassed the 100 percent village revenue mark, and four surpassed the 90 percent mark. The Real Property Tax Law took effect in a transitional form on 1 January 1973. The Ministry of the Interior was working on changes to take place throughout 1973 in order to insure full and successful implementation of the new law.

(C) At the end of 1972 collected revenue reached 99 percent of the Ministry of Interior's revised local revenue goals of \$VN 5,441,944,000. The total collections reported, \$VN 5,402,195,000, omitted December collections for Gia Dinh, Phuoc Long, and Quang Tin Provinces as well as Hue and Can Tho Cities. The 1972 local revenue collections represented a 2.3 billion piaster or 74 percent increase over the original 1972 goal of 3.1 billion piasters established in the CDLD Plan. Cities, provinces, and villages achieved 89 percent, 87 percent, and 108 percent of their respective goals.⁴⁹

Administrative Reform

(U) In September the South Vietnamese Ministry of the Interior announced several administrative reforms that cut red tape for the average citizen. For example, procedures for opening restaurants were simplified; printers were authorized to sell forms needed by the citizen to cope with government formalities and to reduce delays; and village chiefs were allowed to make various certifications and to provide true copies of documents.

(U) In October more significant changes occurred. Decree Law 120 and its accompanying Circular No. 119, both dated 22 August 1972, abolished hamlet elections, reduced the number of administrative personnel at both hamlet and village, and authorized province chiefs to appoint all officials

except the constitutionally protected village council members, who in turn would elect one of their number to serve as village chief. Implementing instructions had established the general criteria for the selection of village and hamlet officials. The most important of these criteria were competence, enthusiasm anticommunist spirit, ethical and moral personal conduct, and attendance at national and local training centers. The October instructions amplified these criteria by emphasizing that the reorganization of village and hamlet governments would provide the desired results only if the province chief selected responsible and competent personnel for those government positions.

(C) The Administration Reform Committee, chaired by the Minister of the Interior, approved two province recommendations during November. The first, from Hau Nghia, recommended that village chiefs rather than province chiefs be authorized to certify the financial status of scholarship applicants' families. The second, from Vinh Binh, recommended that provinces and cities, rather than the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), be allowed to correct errors in veterans' pension books. Continued progress in the program of administrative reform was evident in November as actions directed under Decree Law 120 were reported complete in almost all areas, and new Decree Laws 169 and 170 were published on 25 November. The evident aim common to all three was the elimination of incompetent or untrustworthy local officials in the face of a possible cease-fire situation. The Ministry of Interior reported that by the end of 1972, pursuant to the authority granted in these changes, province chiefs had removed 2,078 hamlet chiefs (about one-fifth) who were guilty of corruption, disloyalty, or incompetence. These removals had occurred in 42 of the 44 provinces. The Quang Tri and Gia Dinh province chiefs did not submit a report.⁵⁰

Youth Activities

(U) The Directorate General of Youth increased its activities during the months of recovery from the invasion. Approximately 25,000 young people, representing the University Student Forces in Defense of the Rear Movement, participated in a presentation ceremony for President Thieu on 12 October 1972. Nha Trang hosted the first of four planned regional entertainment meets with students from eight provinces participating. The Directorate General also formulated plans for a National Youth Fair and a Saigon-Gia Dinh Sports Convention held in December. The Military Region 4 Cultural Meet was held in Can Tho, and the Saigon-Gia Dinh area conducted a special meet with the young people competing in singing, dancing, and drama in November. Directorate officials in Military Region 3 held

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a regional sports meet in Vung Tau with approximately 500 youths participating. The winners of these cultural and sports competitions were eligible for the national finals, which were to be held early in 1973. The National Youth Fair was held in Saigon during the period 24 to 29 December. Vice President Tran Van Huong opened the fair, which featured display booths from most of the provinces, autonomous cities, and from many trade and agricultural schools and private youth organizations. The event culminated a series of fairs held at the local and regional levels earlier in the year. On 30 December a meeting of province and autonomous city youth service chiefs convened in Saigon to critique the 1972 activities and to review plans for 1973.⁵¹

People's Information

(C) The People's Information Program had focused efforts to rally the people through psychological campaigns during the invasion. In September operations turned to the recovery effort and in November to the cease-fire. In late November the government deployed mobile teams throughout the country. These teams consisted of over 5,000 cadets trained in POLWAR activities, Vietnamese Information and Rural Development Cadres, and Chieu Hoi Armed Propaganda Teams. Teams, at times using mobile sound facilities, were assigned to specific geographical areas where they explained the government position on "the national situation before, during, and after the cease-fire" to the village and hamlet occupants. Orderly demonstrations, flag displays, banners, and painted slogans on billboards were in evidence throughout the country.

(U) At the end of December 1972 it was apparent that the government planned a massive overhauling and reorganization of its information activities in 1973, presumably in line with anticipated developments: the cease-fire and national elections. The Ministry of Information was scheduled for early dissolution and replacement by a new organization working directly under the President's Office, rather than as part of the cabinet under the Prime Minister. In related developments, the government began the withdrawal of the several thousand military cadets who had been working in villages to explain the government position in a possible cease-fire situation. Plans were drawn up for redistributing manpower assets to carry on these early efforts. MACV anticipated a presidentially guided reorganization of the former village and hamlet information cadres, the Chieu Hoi Ministry's Armed Propaganda Teams, the JGS-POLWAR Directorate's field personnel, and the Rural Development Cadre.⁵²

LOCAL SELF-DEVELOPMENT

(C) As a result of the enemy offensive and the

extended drought in the Delta, CORDS planners estimated at the end of September that the requirement to import rice would continue through 1973. They noted that improved security permitting farmers to return to their homes and that adequate rainfall for second crop rice planting were necessary before a major change in the rice production situation was possible. During October the frozen shrimp export business showed progress and flourished in several coastal areas. Rice crop prospects remained dismal, however, and the government accelerated arrangements for increased rice imports in the months ahead. Preliminary estimates forecasted 6.0 million metric tons to be marketed in 1973, compared to 6.324 million metric tons in 1972. As a consequence, Vietnamese officials estimated that 410,000 metric tons would have to be imported in 1973.⁵³

(C) Local development agriculture, together with all other productive activities in Vietnam, suffered markedly from the deterioration of security accompanying the NVA offensive. In addition to production losses in the areas which were overrun or hard hit by the enemy, interdiction of lines of communication interfered with the movement of produce to market in many other locations.

Village Self-Development and Rural Credit

(C) Implementation of the Village Self-Development (VSD) Program and the VSD Rural Credit Program was delayed initially because of late approval of the overall 1972-1975 Community Defense and Local Development (CDLD) Plan by the national government. Further delays were caused by the enemy offensive, which occupied the attention of local officials during the spring and summer months in many areas. By the end of August, however, advisors reported that both the VSD Program and the VSD Rural Credit Program had begun to move rapidly. Under the VSD Program, local assemblies had approved some 4,010 new public use projects (total for 1972 through August) and over \$VN 560,000,000 had been allocated in national fund support. This was matched by local contributions of over \$VN 107,000,000 and 182,000 man-days of labor. Construction was reported underway on 1,232 of the projects approved. After August progress was rapid. Over a thousand new public use projects were approved in September and by the end of December a total of 5,428 projects was approved, 90 percent of which were completed or under construction.

(U) Local self-development programs returned to the schedule of progress envisioned by the 1972-1975 four year plan more slowly than the self-defense and self-government programs, due primarily to the offensive and the late arrival of monsoon rains in the Delta. By September, however, the 1972

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Rural credits stimulated agricultural development. A fisherman applies for an 80,000 piaster loan.

Village Self-Development Rural Credit Program and the Village Self-Development Program were progressing satisfactorily. Each succeeding month to year end showed steady growth, shown as follows:

Rural Credit Program
August-December 1972

MONTH	INDIVIDUAL LOANS	MONTHLY TOTAL (\$VN)
AUG	9,824	213,140,700
SEP	21,179	474,379,000
OCT	31,351	699,379,000
NOV	36,845	815,881,900
DEC	44,023	966,657,350

(U) In the province and city self-development programs during September, trained cadresmen began conducting broad spectrum surveys of the autonomous cities of Bien Hoa and Gia Dinh in order to satisfy tax and general statistical requirements. In October CORDS analysts predicted that the new real property tax bill should have a galvanizing effect on development in the Prefecture of Saigon, the autonomous cities, and all sizable urban areas. Pursuant to Arrête No. 533/BNV/HCDP, dated 22

August 1972, the Republic abolished the khu pho administration in the cities and replaced it with the phung administration similar to that in effect in the Saigon Prefecture.

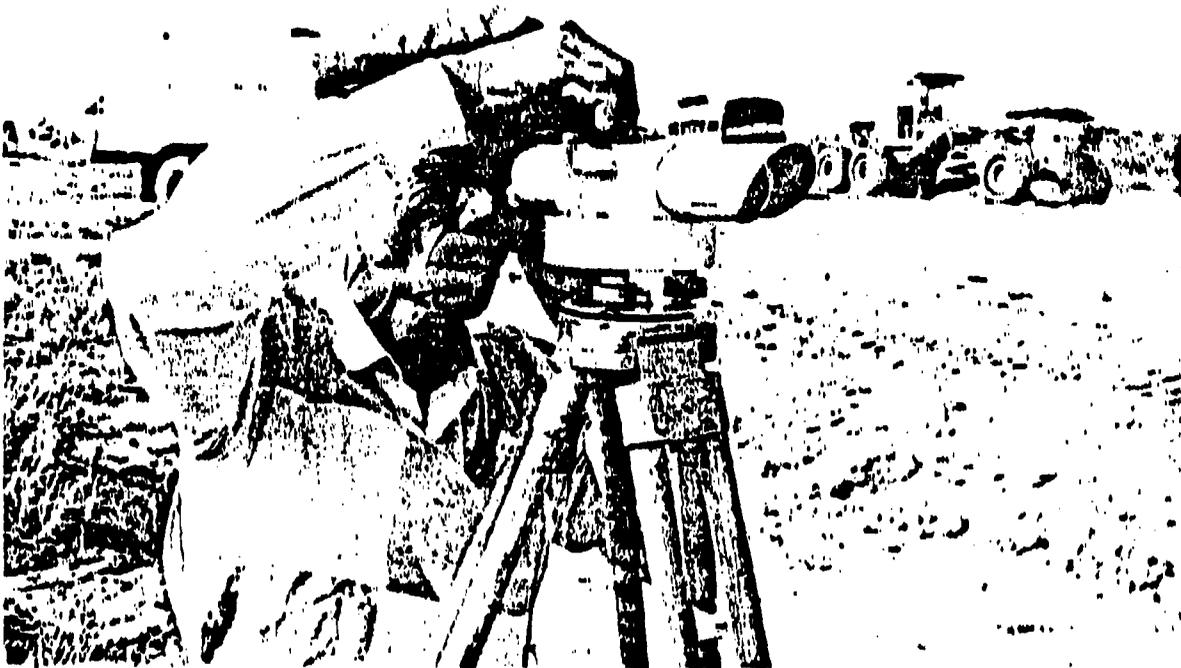
(U) On 27 November, Prime Minister Tran Thien Khiem issued Decree 1153 which amended Decree 315 of 31 March 1971. The principal change involved the wording of Article 5 which specified that the formation of local urban development committees—formerly provincial committees for urban affairs—would be required in the capital and other cities, in addition to the provinces.

National Fund for Local Development

(U) The National Fund for Local Development continued to perform well at province level in both planning and implementation phases. The National Fund for Local Development (NFLD) reviews began on 6 November 1972. The NFLD reviews, funded at 1.7 billion piasters for 1973, began with Military Region 4. The plans for the NFLD programmed approximately 1.36 billion piasters for secondary roads. The remaining funds were al-

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Road construction was slowed in some areas by the enemy offensive but progressed impressively overall.

located to construction of irrigation structures. The Central Pacification and Development Council (CPDC) conducted the final 1973 province National Fund for Local Development Plan review on 21 November. Fund allocations were expected to be completed by the end of December. The 1972 program achieved 74 percent completion by the end of November, up 10 percent from the preceding month. In provinces where performance was good, unspent funds were carried over to support a limited 1973 program. Remaining funds were to be allocated for recovery projects.⁵⁵

Public Works

(U) Secondary road and bridge projects continued to progress satisfactorily. Except for projects which had to be canceled because of the security situation, projects were four-fifths complete at the end of December, up seven percent from November.

Particularly good progress was made in An Xuyen and Vinh Binh Provinces. Active irrigation projects were essentially completed except in Military Region 4, where the Bo Bao Canal and Phase II of the Vinh Phu-Phu Nhuan Canal would probably not be finished until May 1973. In general, province development officers felt that the termination of the province development fund eliminated the one supportive crutch for province councils and that the councils ceased to be useful once deprived of funds. Local revenue improvement and decentralization could be a curative. Funds to be reprogrammed from 1972 to 1973 were approximately \$VN 13 million, with an additional \$VN 2.5 million designated for recovery.⁵⁶

(C) Public works activities continued throughout the offensive with the Ministry of Public Works reprogramming funds to assist in constructing and

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refurbishing refugee camps and, in concert with ARVN, repairing many of the critical bridges destroyed during the offensive. Through autumn 1972 special efforts in bridge and road reconstruction under the Director General of Highways (DGOH) culminated in a survey of 169 bridges in October alone. Progress in Military Region 1 was impeded by the security situation. The cooperation between DGOH and RVNAF engineers remained good despite a lack of centralized coordination at province level. In November and December DGOH and the RVNAF Chief of Engineers planned redeployment and utilization of RVNAF engineers in the post hostilities period. If approved, this plan envisioned realistic priorities, funding, and responsibilities for the entire highway program. Additionally, the CPDC-funded work on railroads and bridges reached 74

percent completion of national goals by the end of November, and work on water and electrical distribution also progressed during the recovery period.

Land Reform

(C) The Land-to-the-Tiller Program remained, according to field reports, the single most socially and politically significant reform undertaken by the Government of Vietnam. It continued to be well received as it moved ahead. The NVA offensive had little effect on the program country-wide, although land distribution was disrupted in the several heavily contested areas. In the critical impact area of the Delta, the program was essentially on schedule. The Government of Vietnam expected to meet the March 1973 goal of one million hectares (2.5 million acres) of land distributed to formerly landless farmers.



Farmer Phan Van Dieu, once a tenant farmer, owns a three hectare rice plot under the reform program.

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(U) The land reform program surged ahead in the recovery period. Title applications at the village level increased approximately 50 percent in September over the average of the previous three months (Fig. D-12). By December titles approved at the village level attained 924,947 hectares compared with 801,803 in October; titles distributed to new land owners rose from 834,581 in October to 694,573 hectares in December. These figures reflected the achievement of 92.4 percent of the million hectares goal with nearly three months remaining for further progress before the deadline of 26 March 1973. The Ministry of Land Reform, Agriculture, Fishery, and Animal Husbandry Development confidently predicted that it would meet and surpass its goal on schedule.³⁷

Education

(C) CORDS field advisors reported that educational development continued essentially on schedule, although the past school year was cut short in the spring when the government closed the schools early as a result of the offensive. A number of schools were destroyed by enemy action and others were used as temporary shelters for refugees. However, rehabilitation of the schools in government controlled territory began in July, and by the end of August virtually all schools were repaired and staffed, ready for the beginning of the fall term in September.

(U) Elementary and secondary schools throughout the country opened in late September. Normal schools opened throughout the Republic in the middle of October with attendance at average levels. Universities opened on 15 November. Reports through November indicated that there were no critical shortages of teachers, supplies, or school buildings. Enrollment and school construction goals

from among the refugees (Fig D-21).

(U) As part of a three month review of secondary school curricula, a National Curriculum Seminar convened on 22 December. One hundred sixty-five educators from the provinces and 100 from Saigon met to review the efforts of the study committee. In December a three-day conference of educators from private schools focused on the comparison of existing national educational standards with established goals. The key role of semi-public and private schools was indicated by the fact that in 1971-72 they enrolled approximately 450,000 of the 840,000 total secondary students in grades 6 through 12.³⁸

War Veterans

(U) Government of Vietnam support of war veterans continued in the recovery period. The National Wards Institute in Saigon and its four branches announced an enrollment of 6,244 students for the 1972-73 school year. This enrollment constituted an increase of more than 1,000 students over figures for the previous school year. The National Rehabilitation Institute planned to expand its services by opening ten prosthetic shops and physiotherapy clinics in selected provincial hospitals. One of the four claims processing teams completed training in use of an automated processing system in September. This team processed over 10,000 claims, which represented almost half of all claims manually processed by all four teams during the previous month.

(U) By the end of October the Ministry of War Veterans' (MWV) active caseload of benefit recipients stood at 831,486. That total included 75,737 disabled veterans, 120,264 widows, 119,427 dependent parents, 323,712 Wards of the Nation, 145,996 orphans (non-wards), and 38,350 retired veterans.

SCHOOL STATUS, SEPTEMBER 1972

TYPE SCHOOLING AND AGE GROUP	SCHOOL AGE POPULATION	SCHOOL AGE POPULATION IN SCHOOL
Elementary Education, ages 6 to 11.....	2,920,000	2,917,271
Secondary Education, ages 12 to 18.....	3,524,000	897,036
Higher Education, ages 18 to 24.....	2,070,000	98,649
Number of Elementary Teachers.....	56,122	
Number of Secondary Teachers.....	26,835	
Number of Higher Education Professors.....	1,570	

Sources: MACCORDS

Figure D-21

had been met for the first three quarters of the calendar year. Elementary schools functioned in many of the refugee centers throughout Vietnam. The Ministry of Social Welfare and various private agencies provided school supplies, texts, tents, and other equipment. The ministry obtained teachers

In addition, the members accomplished more than 150 job referrals during October. Fifty-two blind trainees attended National Rehabilitation Institute courses in Saigon and Can Tho in October.

(U) By the end of 1972 the Ministry of War Veterans had added more than 208,000 people to its

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active caseload of veterans and dependents receiving benefits. This resulted from a greater number of persons qualifying for benefits because of increased hostilities plus an increase in ministry efficiency in processing claims.⁵⁹

War Victims

(C) By the end of August almost 980,000 refugees had been generated by the enemy offensive. Of these, some 600,000 were in refugee camps under the care of the Government of Vietnam. In general the handling of the immediate refugee problem was satisfactory; government officials and innumerable Vietnamese private groups and individuals, religious organizations, and business groups provided food and other commodities, shelter, and a wide variety of services. Although a number of refugees returned to their villages and more were expected to return in the near future, those refugees from areas occupied or constantly harassed by the enemy remained uncertain of the time of their return. According to the PAAS, public opinion of government assistance to refugees varied between the rural and urban population. Of the rural people surveyed during the months of June, July, and August only 35 percent, on the average, considered this assistance to be satisfactory. During the same period, 47 percent of the urban people considered the assistance to be satisfactory.

(U) The total number of refugees generated since the beginning of the enemy offensive increased by approximately 157,000 during October, to a total of 1,191,900. Heavy fighting in Quang Ngai Province and a reassessment of the Binh Dinh refugee situation accounted for most of the increase. The number of people who took refuge in official government war victim sites increased by almost 90,000 to 706,300. Once again, the major increase occurred in Quang Ngai. Rice scandals in Da Nang surfaced during the month and the national administration appointed a committee to investigate why poor quality rice was provided to refugees.

(U) In November joint Government of Vietnam-US efforts resulted in the establishment of impact teams to work in Military Regions 1 and 2. Funds were provided for these teams and they were given the authority to hire laborers, purchase supplies and equipment, approve projects, and do all else necessary to improve conditions for the almost 850,000 refugees living in temporary sites. During their first week of operations both teams made a number of positive recommendations and approved the expenditures required to initiate these actions.

(U) During December the number of refugees generated decreased to the lowest level since the start of the NVA offensive and progress was made

in returning refugees in refugee centers to their homes. The lull in military activity in December was the major factor in the low number of refugees generated. The number of people taking refuge in war victims' sites decreased because of increased security, allowing people from Tien Phuoc District, Quang Tin Province, to return home, and a conciliation and subsequent resurvey of Binh Dinh Province sites that returned people to their homes.⁶⁰

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

(U) Government of Vietnam agencies achieved progress in organizational planning and in the establishment of responsibilities and goals for the special emphasis programs during the recovery period. The Urban Development Program progressed satisfactorily and the Ministry for the Development of Ethnic Minorities received significant government recognition and support for its various programs. The Elimination of Social Evils Program also progressed.

Urban Development

(U) By 30 September urban surveys were 29 percent complete. Land use surveys conducted in the 11 autonomous cities were 93 percent complete by November. During September 421 urban cadremen from the 11 autonomous cities completed in-service training in the urban development program.

(U) The CORDS training staff completed an urban training program proposal in October for implementation during the remainder of FY 73. This proposal included plans for a seminar of city and urban mayors, chiefs of local pacification and development council coordinating centers, and local reconstruction service chiefs. Another proposed training program concentrated on the familiarization of local urban affairs committees with national policies, techniques, and program requirements. USAID signed the Urban Development Project Agreement on 19 October, which provided 250 million piasters for use in projects in the autonomous cities. On 13 October the deputy city mayors conducted a review of the 1972 CDLC Plan. While the Local Revenue Improvement Program (LRIP) generally achieved little progress during October, the passage of the new tax law provided the Saigon City Administration guidelines on which to base future actions.⁶¹

Health

(U) The Ministry of Health continued to give first priority to refugees and battle casualties. The ministry completed technical dossiers on a number of new facilities for construction and forwarded them to the Directorate General of Reconstruction and Urban Planning for concurrence. Construction of 12

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maternities and dispensaries began in November.

(U) The government ordered an August graduation of all medical and dental students who would normally have graduated in December. The early commencement eased the problem of medical attention for military casualties, war victims, and refugees. There were no epidemic outbreaks of disease in Vietnam during December. This lack of epidemics was a most encouraging sign in view of the war victim and refugee situation, especially in Da Nang.⁸³

Ethnic Minorities

(U) The Ministry for the Development of Ethnic Minorities (MDEM) devoted most of its attention to the development of resettlement and return to village planning throughout the recovery period. The ministry coordinated several proposed moves and conducted detailed planning for future resettlement. Planning, programming, and budgeting for 1973 progressed satisfactorily. Over 300 ministry officials and cadres received training in specialized courses concerning the government programs.

(U) The National Montagnard Training Center (NMTCC) terminated its 1972 program at the end of November. More than 3,300 students had completed training during 1972. The original goal set was 5,250; however, enemy activity which closed the center for six weeks caused the shortfall. During December the Government of Vietnam approved two resettlement plans for Montagnards, involving loans to Darlac Province for 3.11 and 38.77 million piasters for the moves. A new program for Son Thon Rural Development (STRD) cadre in 1973 was completed in December. Under this program, six seven-

man cadre teams would operate in each Highland Village, with larger teams in villages with greater populations. The new plan stressed inspection, upgrading of personnel, and improvement of middle-level leadership. MDEM completed the village self-development program which was to be administered in ethnic minority villages during 1973. In late December the MDEM began a long overdue reorganization to eliminate the poor performers and adjust to its expanding role for 1973. The total MDEM budget for 1973 was nearly double that of 1972.⁸⁴

Eradication of Social Evils

(U) Through the recovery period, governmental police officials continued to emphasize the eradication of social evils. Although security conditions in some areas inhibited narcotics suppression, there were only 458 narcotic arrests in September 1972 as compared with 646 in September 1971. Recent decree-laws which provided for the death penalty for persons engaged in organized trafficking in drugs or who committed major crimes of violence appeared partly responsible for a decline in criminal activity. The street retail price of opium reportedly doubled, while that of heroin more than tripled. BG Binh, National Police Commander, ordered police in the Saigon/Gia Dinh area to crack down on gambling and promised disciplinary action against police personnel who tolerated gambling within their area of responsibility.

(U) During December the Judicial Police arrested 328 offenders for narcotics violations; seizures of narcotics included 2.55 kilos of heroin, 10.85 kilos of opium, and 7.13 kilos of marijuana.⁸⁴

STAND-DOWN

(U) On 27 February 1973 CORDS stood down as a functional MACV staff element, transferring some functions to the Office of the Special Assistant to the Ambassador for Field Operations (SAAFO), others to USAID and the Defense Attache's Office, and terminating certain functions in accordance with the cease-fire agreements of 28 January 1973.⁸⁵ During January and February the Government of Vietnam continued the implementation of the CDLD Plan with CORDS advice and assistance. Particular attention was devoted to security in the face of widespread attempts by the enemy to improve his posture before and after the cease-fire.

(C) On 27 February 1973 residual CORDS civilian personnel in the field were transferred to the newly established Directorates for Resettlement and Reconstruction under four consulates-general located in Da Nang, Nha Trang, Bien Hoa, and Can Tho. Subordinate elements were assigned to 17 area Re-

settlement and Reconstruction Offices as the MACV-CORDS province advisory teams stood down. At the headquarters level, staff management functions were transferred to SAAFO, while advisory support responsibility for specific aspects of the CDLD effort was reallocated as noted below.

(C) The Associate Director for Territorial Security stood down on 27 February 1973. During January and February advisory efforts were aimed at completing the transition to the Republic of critical management tools including the Territorial Forces Activity System and the People's Self-Defense Force Management Information System. Included in this final transition were the latest computer assisted management techniques such as special reports tailored for management by exception as well as computer produced map plots supporting a variety of management requirements related to the Regional and Popular Forces. While

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this transition was being completed successfully, the advisory effort continued to focus on planning advice by providing the Joint General Staff conceptual support relating to future requirements such as force reductions and reserve organizational systems.

(C) During January and February the public safety advisory effort continued in support of the major objectives for the National Police of establishing an effective management system, increasing command and technical training, and assuming responsibility for local security in pacified areas. Special advisory attention was given to the police programs aimed at eradicating drug abuse and eliminating criminal subversive elements. The police advisory effort began to draw down following the announcement of the cease-fire agreement, and the advisory effort was terminated as of 27 February 1973. USAID assumed responsibility for monitoring any future assistance.

(C) As of 27 February 1973 the advisory responsibility for the Chieu Hoi Program was transferred to SAAFO. During January a total of 11,967 Hoi Chanh (returnees) were registered, although of these 10,973 were VC prisoners (Southerners) who were converted to Hoi Chanh status (Fig. D-8). The smooth administration of this conversion reflected the professional management capability, developed within the Chieu Hoi Ministry. The remaining 994 returnees represented an increase of 197 over the number in December 1972. While the rate of returnees decreased during the first week of February (an annual pattern in conjunction with Tet), it rose again with the increase in military activity following the cease-fire.

(C) January 1973 saw the continuation of annual and special planning for a wide variety of local development activities: second increment recovery plans for 14 priority provinces were reviewed by the Central Pacification and Development Council; ongoing support for local construction was assured with the reprogramming of 1972 monies in the Province Development Fund for 1973 (no new funds were allocated beyond February 1973); annual planning for the National Fund for Local Development was completed successfully with monies allocated for 1973; the Prime Minister directed rural development cadre in the villages to report monthly on the activities of Province Mobile Assis-

tance Teams, thus adding increased emphasis to the upgrading of local administration; 19 village chiefs completed a two-week village orientation tour in Taiwan; and planning was completed for the continuation of this training program through the year. Also completed was a new plan for the employment of Highland rural development cadre whereby small teams (up to seven men) specially trained in local administration would be assigned to assist each ethnic minority community. Urban planning at the national level continued with renewed emphasis, while the Saigon City Council approved new property tax rates to increase revenues. CORDS relinquished advisory responsibility for the activities when the Associate Directorate for Community Development was transferred to USAID on 1 February 1973.

(C) CORDS continued to support war victims and veterans programs until the transfer of the Associate Directorate for War Victims to USAID on 1 February 1973. During January, 25,000 veterans and dependents were added to the 208,000 registered in 1972, for a total of 874,393 individuals receiving benefits from the Ministry of War Veterans as of 31 January 1973. An automated claims processing system was implemented at the end of January with the expectation of increasing numbers of claims to be processed in the years ahead. The increase in military activities which began shortly before the cease-fire on 28 January generated additional war victims requiring relief and assistance. Within a few days over 200,000 people were displaced, although many of these were forced to leave their homes for no more than several days, and by mid-February only 60,000 remained displaced. Of these 15,000 were located in official refugee sites. Relief efforts for these people were continuing as USAID assumed responsibility for this advisory effort, and additional funds had been provided the provinces to ensure support for those who could not return home.

(U) As CORDS stood down, some reporting functions were discontinued while others were transferred to SAAFO or to the Government of Vietnam. By January, the HES reporting system had been 80 percent Vietnamized, and in February the Government of Vietnam assumed full responsibility for the field reporting system.⁶⁸

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REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DEVELOPMENT — ANNEX D

1. Memo (U), SECDEF to Chairman, JCS, 2 Aug 72, Subj: Commendation.
2. This section is based upon data found in Msgs (C), USAID to SECSTATE, Subj: Economic Outlook (U), Economic Recession (U), and Economic Impact of Enemy Offensive (U), sent throughout 1972, DTG and GDS not available.
3. Msgs (C), COMUSMACV to JCS, 091150Z Apr 72, 100910Z Jul 72, 101210Z Oct 72, and 081030 Jan 73, Subj: MACV Report on Economic Aspects of Vietnamization (U), GDS-Not Stated.
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5. DF (C), MACEA, 24 Mar 72, Subj: Vietnam Economic Study (U), GDS-Not Stated.
6. DF (C) MASCA, 24 Mar 72, Subj: Vietnam Economic Study (U), GDS-Not Stated.
7. Country-to-Country Agreement (U), #5609/EF/KHT, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, RVN, 14 Dec 72.
8. Memo (U), Mond, RVN, to Chief, JGS RVNAF, 24 Aug 72, Subj: Non-participation by the Military in Commercial Activities.
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21. MACV Command History, 1971, Vol I (S/NF), pp VII-1 - VII-1D, Gp-4; Briefing (U), MACCORDS, undtd, Subj: 1972-75 Four Year Plan (U), p 1.
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27. Rpt (C), MACCORDS, undtd, Subj: Progress of Progress of P Pacification for December 1972, p 5, GDS-78.
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30. Ibid., pp 16-17.
31. Ibid., p 19.
32. Ibid., p 5.
33. Ibid., p 20.
34. Ibid., p 21.
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38. Rpt (C), MACCORDS, undtd, Subj: Report on Progress of Pacification for September 1972 (U), p 2; Rpt (C), MACCORDS, 22 Nov 72, Subj: Report on Progress of Pacification for October 1972 (U), p 2; Rpt (C), MACCORDS, 31 Dec 72, Subj: Report on Progress of Pacification for November 1972 (U), p 2; Same as #28, pp 11-12; Same as #27, p 38.
39. Same as #37, p 2; Same as #38, Sep POP, p 2; Same as #38, Oct POP, p 2; Same as #38, Nov POP, p 2 (Note: POP is short title for Progress of Pacification Report).
40. Same as #37, p 6.
41. Same as #38, Oct POP, p 2.
42. Same as #28, p 2.
43. Same as #38, Oct POP, pp 2-3; Same as #28, p 3.
44. Same as #28, p 3.

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